



















# TABLE OF FOUR SIMILAR ALPHABETS.

1 HEBREW.

2 GREEK.

3 ARABIC.

4 OLD IRISH.

shewing the 16 primitive letters, and the later compounded and supplementary letters, together with the corresponding English letters, and their numeral values.

4. Old Irish.	3. Arabic.	2. Greek.	1. Hebrew.
ailm <i>elm</i>	1 alef	1 A alpha	1 A aleph, <i>ox, leader</i>
beth <i>birch</i>	2 ba	2 B beta	2 B beth, <i>house, booth</i>
gart <i>ivy</i>	3 gim	3 G gamma	3 G gimel, <i>camel</i>
deur <i>oak</i>	4 dal	4 D delta	4 D dalet, <i>door</i>
eadha <i>aspen</i>	5 Ha	5 E epsilon	5 E hē, <i>hollow</i>
fearn <i>alder</i>	6 waw	6 V digamma	6 V vau, <i>hook</i>
	7 [z]	7 Z ζ zeta	7 Z zain <i>weapon</i>
	8 [hha]	8 H η eta	8 H heth, <i>fence</i>
	9 [ta]	9 Θ θ theta	9 TH teth, <i>scroll</i>
jodha <i>yew</i>	10 ya	10 I ι iota	10 I yod, <i>hand</i>
coll <i>hazel</i>	20 caf	20 K κ kappa	20 K caph, <i>hollow, cup</i>
luis <i>quicken</i>	30 lam	30 Λ λ lambda	30 L lamed <i>oxgoad</i>
muin <i>vine</i>	40 mim	40 M μ mu	40 M mem, <i>water</i>
nuin <i>ash</i>	50 nun	50 Ν ν nu	50 N nun, <i>fish</i>
oir <i>spindle</i>	70 [zin]	60 [Ξ ξ xi]	60 X samech, <i>prop</i>
pieth <i>bhog</i>	80 ain	70 O o omicron	70 O oin, <i>eye</i>
	fa	80 Π π pi	80 P pē, <i>mouth</i>
	[sad]	90	90 TS tzaddi <i>owl</i>
	[kaf]	100	100 Q quoph, <i>ape</i>
ruis <i>elder</i>	ra	100 P ρ rho	100 Q quoph, <i>ape</i>
suil ---	shin	200 Σ σ sigma	200 T resh, <i>head</i>
teine---	ta	300 T τ tau	300 S shin, <i>tooth</i>
uath <i>white thorn</i>	tha	400 T υ upsilon	400 T tau <i>cross</i>
	rha	500 Φ φ phi	
	dhal	600 Χ χ chi	
	dad	700 Ψ ψ psi	
	da	800 Ω ω omega	
	ghain 1000	800	

# HEBREW RECORDS:

AN

## HISTORICAL ENQUIRY

CONCERNING THE AGE, AUTHORSHIP, AND AUTHENTICITY

OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

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BY THE REV. DR GILES.



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## PREFACE.

It was my first intention to send forth this book without a Preface, leaving it to the reader to gather from its contents, and more especially from the Introduction, such inferences as might fairly be drawn from them, as to the particular views which guided me in its composition, and led to its publication. It appears, however, in the judgment of a friend, that some persons may fall into error as to the motives which caused me to publish this work, and may ascribe it to a feeling of hostility towards a book held in universal estimation. Against the injustice of this charge, I should still have not deemed it necessary to protect myself in any other way than by silence. For, though I will not pretend to be ignorant that the religious character of a work must vary greatly in proportion to its historical tendencies, yet I should still have left this book to advocate its own doctrines, had it not been strongly urged that some persons may even wilfully pervert its meaning, and ascribe to it a tendency which its author never contemplated. To guard against such a possibility, I think it right to premise that this work is historical, and not theological. Its object is, to assign a certain value and antiquity to the Old Testament,—such a value indeed and such an antiquity as to leave it, even in my own judgment, what it has always been in the opinion of nine-tenths of civilized men, the most wonderful record of past times that the world has yet seen. The conclusion which I have endeavoured to establish in this Historical Inquiry, so far from diminishing the value of the Old Testament, seems to me really to add thereto, for it substitutes certainty in the place of uncertainty, light for darkness, and reason for mystery, whilst it is left for those who pursue the subject by deducing religious doctrines from historical fact, to determine how far the same data may be of use as shewing the

importance of studying the spirit rather than the letter of a code of laws, certainly better adapted for Jews than Christians, and more in harmony with the manners which prevailed in Palestine before the Christian era, than with the state of things which now exists in England, or, in fact, in any part of Europe.

In the Appendix to this volume are given some long extracts from the laborious works of Prideaux and Shuckford, not on account of the deductions which those learned compilers have arrived at,—for these are often diametrically opposed to my own conclusions,—but on account of the full information which they furnish on their respective subjects. The reader is thus saved the trouble of referring to the original works from which those extracts are taken.

It is also necessary to allude to an apparent omission of certain chapters which had at first entered into the plan of this work—i. e. concerning the two books of Chronicles, the Prophetical books, and others, known and admitted to be of late origin. The increasing bulk of the volume, and the completeness with which the subject seemed already to have been discussed, have been the cause why these chapters have not been added.

In the Introductory chapter of this work it is hinted that a similar inquiry has been instituted concerning the Christian Scriptures, or the books of the New Testament. The statement is certainly correct, but whether the result of the investigation will ever be made public, is a question that must be decided at a future time. The nature of the contemplated work, however it may involve some questions similar to those which are here started concerning the Old Testament, will of course be in many respects very different; for, whereas my object here has been to prove the Old Testament, in its actual form, to be a thousand years later than the date to which it is generally referred, yet no one has had the boldness to assert that the New Testament is not a relic of primitive Christian times.



## CONTENTS.

Chapter	page
1 Introduction . . . . .	1
2 Chronology of the books which form the Hebrew canon, the Old Testament . . . . .	4
3 That the books of the Old Testament are not 39 in num- ber but 17 only . . . . .	9
4 That the five books of Moses, with the books of Joshua, Judges, Ruth, I Samuel, II Samuel, I Kings, and II Kings, are closely connected, and form a continuous narrative. . . . .	13
5 That the Old Testament is compiled from more ancient works . . . . .	18
1 <i>Interruptions in the narrative</i> . . . . .	19
2 <i>Repetitions</i> . . . . .	21
3 <i>Earlier writings are quoted by the authors of the old Testament</i> . . . . .	25
6 Chronological summary of Jewish history . . . . .	29
7 Of the Septuagint translation of the Old Testament . . . . .	32
8 Value of contemporary history . . . . .	34
9 Of the reputed authors of the several books in the Old Testament . . . . .	37
10 The claims of Moses to the authorship of the Pentateuch investigated. 1. From Tradition or Universal Consent . . . . .	45
11 Examination of the internal evidence which the Pentateuch is said to furnish for the belief that it was written, in its present form, by Moses. . . . .	74

12	The case of the Samaritan Pentateuch examined . . . . .	80
13	That Moses is not the author of the Pentateuch, proved—	
	I. from internal evidence . . . . .	85
1	<i>The two tables of stone seem to have supplied the place of a BOOK of the law . . . . .</i>	86
2	<i>Manner in which Moses is mentioned in the Pentateuch . . . . .</i>	88
3	<i>A book more ancient than the Pentateuch quoted by the writer of the Pentateuch . . . . .</i>	91
4	<i>Anachronism concerning the enmity of the Egyptians towards shepherds . . . . .</i>	92
5	<i>Anachronism that Moses should record his own death . . . . .</i>	93
6	<i>Anachronism in names, especially those of places, mentioned in the Pentateuch . . . . .</i>	96
	1. Hebron . . . . . page 97	6. Bethel . . . . . : 101
	2. Dan . . . . . 98	7. Beersheba . . . . . 101
	3. Succoth . . . . . 99	8. Hormah . . . . . 102
	4. Eshcol . . . . . 100	9. Gilead . . . . . 103
	5. Bethlehem . . . . . 100	
7	<i>Allusion to events that are known to have happened after the death of Moses . . . . .</i>	104
	1. The expulsion of the Canaanites. . . . . page 105	
	2. Allusion to the kings of Israel . . . . . 107	
	3. The ceasing of the manna . . . . . 108	
	4. The sinew that was not eaten . . . . . 109	
8	<i>The Pentateuch betrays a more advanced state of knowledge than prevailed in the time of Moses . . . . .</i>	109
1.	In the account of the four rivers . . . . . 110	6. Allusion to the Sidonians . . . . . 113
2.	Ararat . . . . . 110	7. Minute account of Meribah . . . . . 113
3.	Damascus and Hobah . . . . . 110	8. Of Beer . . . . . 113
4.	Canaan . . . . . 111	9. Jericho . . . . . 113
5.	Mention of the Ishmeelites 111	10. Bedstead of Og. . . . . 114
9	<i>Variation in the name given to the priest of Midian, father-in-law of Moses, and to Joshua . . . . .</i>	114
10	<i>Argument derived from the use of the expression “unto this day.” . . . .</i>	116
11	<i>Allusion to the want of a regular government. . . . .</i>	118
14	Book of Joshua examined—Anachronisms and other internal evidence shewing that it was written in a later age . . . . .	119

15	Book of Judges similarly examined . . . .	131
16	The book of Ruth examined . . . .	134
17	First book of Samuel examined . . . .	135
18	Second book of Samuel examined . . . .	140
19	The two books of Kings examined . . . .	143
20	Errors, discrepancies, anachronisms &c. in the historical books generally, shewing that they are not contempo- rary records . . . .	144*
1.	<i>Two versions of the Ten Commandments</i> . . . .	145
2	<i>Inconsistencies concerning Abraham and Sarah.</i> . . . .	147
3	<i>Different accounts of the length of time which the Israel- ites sojourned in Egypt</i> . . . .	148
4	<i>Discrepancies in the history of David and Saul</i> . . . .	152
5	<i>Inaccuracies concerning Jacob's children</i> . . . .	155
6	<i>Excessive accounts of the population of the Holy Land</i> . . . .	157
7	<i>Error in the number of Solomon's officers</i> . . . .	158
8	<i>Error in the number of talents brought from Ophir</i> . . . .	159
9	<i>Concerning the situation of Tarshish</i> . . . .	159
10	<i>The Law of Moses not observed by the Israelites</i> . . . .	160
11	<i>Inconsistency between Samuel's picture of a king, and that ascribed to Moses in Deut. xvii</i> . . . .	161
21	References to facts of which no records survive. . . .	163
22	Grammatical subtleties are a proof of a later age . . . .	169
23	That the Israelites spoke Egyptian when they came out of Egypt, and only acquired the Hebrew or Canaanitish language by a long residence in Canaan . . . .	173
	NOTE. <i>Extract from Dr Bosworth's work on the Origin of the English, Germanic and Scandinavian languages</i> . . . .	191
24	That the Chaldee language was the result of the Roman conquest of Judæa, and not of the Babylonish cap- tivity—Proved, I. from the Old Testament . . . .	194
1	<i>Ezra and others after the captivity still wrote in Hebrew and not in Chaldee</i> . . . .	194
2	<i>The Targums or Chaldee paraphrases are later than the Christian era, because not wanted until then</i> . . . .	203
3	<i>Fowel-points and accents modern—the want of them not felt until after the time of Christ—i. e. the Hebrew was still a living language at the begin- ing of the Christian era</i> . . . .	204

25	That the Jewish nation spoke Hebrew as late as the time of Christ—proved, 2ndly. from the New Testament .	209
1	<i>The Hebrew is expressly mentioned in the New Testament as being still the language of the people .</i>	210
2	<i>Hebrew words are found in the New Testament :</i>	212
3	<i>Proper names of persons and places are of the same character as those which occur in the Old Testament</i>	216
4	<i>Christ himself reads from the book of the Old Testament</i>	217
26	Successive changes in the religion of the Hebrews, resulting from their contact with foreign nations .	218
27	That the books of the Old Testament are later than the Babylonish Captivity . . . . .	235
1.	<i>Close connexion of the narrative from Genesis to the second book of Kings . . . . .</i>	235
2.	<i>Silence concerning the mode in which the book of the Law was preserved during the captivity . . . . .</i>	236
3	<i>Allusion in Genesis to the Babylonish mode of building</i>	239
4	<i>The expressions ON THIS SIDE Jordan, BEYOND JORDAN examined . . . . .</i>	241
5	<i>The Captivity and Assyria are actually mentioned in the early parts of the Old Testament . . . . .</i>	246
28	On the art of writing—Its gradual developement through five stages. . . . .	248
1	<i>Mexican Picture-writing . . . . .</i>	253
2	<i>Egyptian Hieroglyphics . . . . .</i>	254
2	<i>Chinese Word-writing . . . . .</i>	256
4	<i>Syllabic or Consonantal writing in use among the Hebrews . . . . .</i>	258
5	<i>Alphabetic writing, as used in Grece, and by other ancient and modern nations . . . . .</i>	260
	NOTE. <i>Extract from Dr Wall's Inquiry into the origin of alphabetic writing . . . . .</i>	261
29	Alphabetic Writing unknown to the early Egyptians, and consequently to Moses . . . . .	263
1	<i>Positive testimony of ancient authors to a peculiar character of writing among the Egyptians . . . . .</i>	268
2	<i>Absence of all mention of phonetic or alphabetic legends in the writings of the ancients . . . . .</i>	276

3	<i>Present appearance of the Egyptian monuments, and various opinions about them . . . . .</i>	276
4	<i>Sameness of the written but difference of the spoken language in the various parts of Ancient Egypt . . . . .</i>	281
5	<i>The introduction of the Greek alphabet into the Coptic or later Egyptian language shews that there was no previous Egyptian alphabet . . . . .</i>	282
	NOTE. <i>Extract shewing Dr Wall's opinion, that the Egyptians derived alphabetic writing from Greece . . . . .</i>	285
30	Style of the Old Testament the same throughout—because all written or compiled at the same time. Chaldaisms in the early parts of the bible, though not so many as in the later books—reason of this—Chaldee and Hebrew very similar. . . . .	287
31	Alphabet of Cadmus—Phœnician origin of letters—Conclusion . . . . .	295

## APPENDIX.

1	The Samaritan Pentateuch. From Dean Prideaux's Connection of Sacred and Profane History, vol. i, p. 416, sixth edition, 1719. . . . .	i
2	Mutability of language. From Dr Shuckford's Connection of Sacred and Profane History, vol. i. p. 124, third edition, 1743. . . . .	vi
3	On Alphabetic Writing. From the same work, volume i, page 222 . . . . .	ix
4	On the Vowel Points. From Prideaux's Connection of the History of the Old and New Testament, Sixth edition, Part I, p. 348. . . . .	xxii
5.	On the Targums or Chaldee Paraphrases. From the same work, Part II, vol. ii, page 531 . . . . .	xxxvii



1871. I have been thinking of you very much lately, and  
wondering how you are getting on. I hope you are  
well and happy. I have been very busy lately, but  
I have managed to find some time to write to you.

I have been thinking of you very much lately, and  
wondering how you are getting on. I hope you are  
well and happy. I have been very busy lately, but  
I have managed to find some time to write to you.

# ERRATA.

- Page 24, line 8, for *write* read *wrote*.
- 54, line 25, "except Jeremiah and Malachi. " This is not quite correct. There are other slight notices, as in Daniel ix, 11 : but these occur in books, known to have been written after the captivity.
- 125, line 22, for *Canaan* read *Egypt*.
- 125, line 2. After this line, insert " The change of name from Jebusi to Jerusalem is again indicated at chap. xviii, verse 28."
- 143\*, line 10, for *Family* read *Family Bible*.
- 155, line 13, for *Inaccuracy* read *Inaccuracies*.



# THE HEBREW SCRIPTURES.

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## CHAPTER I.

### INTRODUCTION.

The belief in a supreme Being or Beings has been found to exist in almost every nation of the world. I use the qualifying expression *almost*, because travellers have discovered a few tribes of savages, who seemed entirely unconscious of the existence of a God, or of any power superior to the ordinary law of nature. These exceptions, therefore, do not interfere with the course of our present argument, which, being addressed to those who are living in a civilized country and not to ignorant savages, may assume as a fact an opinion so generally and almost universally entertained. Religion, which regulates the conduct of men, in their relation towards the Deity, is a term naturally varying according to the modes of belief prevalent in different countries. Experience also has shewn that, even among the same people, an exact identity of religious belief cannot long exist. This has been the case, even among the four principal religions, which, from their having been reduced to writing and promulgated to the world in a set canonical form, would, we might suppose, have saved the people who professed them, from this breach of unity. Yet we find that Jews, Christians, Brahmins and Mahometans are equally divided into sects, and disagree severally

among themselves as much as they are at variance generally with each other. The most remarkable feature in this universal spirit of variance, is the fact that, whilst all the sects who belong to the same faith, differ in their application of it, as widely as the imagination can conceive, they all appeal to the same religious books or Scriptures, as favouring their own individual views, and authorising their own particular practice. If this be true, it becomes not only important, but an absolute duty, to examine with the most scrupulous minuteness that standard, which, though in such general use among mankind, is perpetually producing such a want of uniformity, in what so intimately concerns us, both as a society and as individuals, namely *truth*, about our everlasting interests, and *moral practice*, as it regards our comfort and social happiness in this present life.

As I have before remarked, there are four principal religions, now prevalent among the civilized inhabitants of the earth : these are ; 1. The Brahmin, 2. the Mahometan, 3. the Christian, and 4. the Jewish. Of the three first it is sufficient to observe that the Brahmin—by which term, for want of knowing a better, I mean the religion of the Hindoos—is so revolting to common sense, that it would be a useless labour to discuss its tenets, or to balance its excellencies and its defects, among Europeans ; the Mahometan is evidently the work of a man, making use of human fanaticism as his tool ; and the Christian, though based on the noblest object, that of ameliorating and renovating the human race, and worthy to be considered apart, cannot, however, occupy our attention, until we have first directed our enquiry toward its parent, the religion of the Jews ; because Christianity and Judaism are inseparably united ; neither can exist without the other ; or, at least, they can only abstractedly exist as separate religions ; but in an historical point of view they are indivisible : they must maintain their ground or fall together : for, though



the practical precepts of Christianity may be taught without the slightest reference to the Jews, or to the Old Testament, yet the doctrinal parts of the Christian scheme, and all that gives to it the character of a Divine revelation, become destitute of meaning, until they are explained by the antecedents of the Jewish Scriptures, concerning the temptation of Eve, the fall of Adam, and his ejection from Paradise.

It seems, therefore, that the Old Testament is a volume of the highest value to Christians, because its contents are essential to the existence of our own creed, to which the older religion of the Jews is, in fact, the precursor. I have, therefore, made it the subject of the following work, in which it is proposed to enquire into the historical value of the several books of the Old Testament, their authors, the time when they were written, the harmony, as well as discrepancies, which exist between them, besides many other points which will incidentally arise, and may be useful in determining the Historical character of these Scriptures, and their value as evidences, concerning those accounts of the early history of the world, which are generally received among mankind, on *their* authority alone.

## CHAPTER II.

CHRONOLOGY OF THE BOOKS WHICH FORM THE HEBREW  
CANON, THE OLD TESTAMENT.

The Old Testament, according to the English Bible, consists of thirty-nine books, written mostly in the Hebrew, but partly in a different language, called *Chaldee*, besides Apocryphal books, which exist in Greek or Latin only, and for that reason principally, have been considered by some classes of Christians, to possess less authority than the former, whilst by others they have been excluded from the Bible altogether. The names of these books are as follows :

Genesis	II. Chronicles	Daniel
Exodus	Ezra	Hosea
Leviticus	Nehemiah	Joel
Numbers	Esther	Amos
Deuteronomy	Job	Obadiah
Joshua	Psalms	Jonah
Judges	Proverbs	Micah
Ruth	Ecclesiastes	Nahum
I. Samuel	Song of Solomon	Habakkuk
II. Samuel	Isaiah	Zephaniah
I. Kings	Jeremiah	Haggai
II. Kings	Lamentations	Zechariah
I. Chronicles	Ezekiel	Malachi

*Names of the Apocryphal books.*

I. Esdras	Wisdom	Story of Susanna
II. Esdras	Ecclesiasticus	Bel and the Dragon
Tobit	Baruch containing	Prayer of Manas.
Judith	the ep. of Jerem.	I. Maccabees
The conclusion of	Song of the three	II. Maccabees
Esther	children	

It may be mentioned, as a fact of minor, but still of some, importance to our present subject, that these books are not always placed in the same order : the Greek translation, called the Septuagint, and the Latin, called the Vulgate, differ in their arrangement from the Hebrew and English Bibles and from one another. Neither do they agree wholly in their contents ; for the Hebrew Bible excludes all those books which in England are called Apocryphal ; the Vulgate or Latin version admits only Tobit, Judith, Wisdom of Solomon, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch, with the First and Second books of Maccabees : the Greek Bible admits the First book of Esdras, Tobit, Judith, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch, and the two books of Maccabees, to which is added a third book of Maccabees, not to be found in either the Hebrew, Latin, or English Bible.

Let us now briefly review the contents of these books one after the other, principally for chronological purposes ; as we shall hereafter have occasion to refer to this subject, and such a summary will save the reader from the necessity of consulting the books themselves, except on important points, in the argument, which will presently be unfolded.

### 1. *Genesis.*

This book relates the history of the World from the Creation to the time of Abraham, who is thought to have lived nineteen hundred years before Christ ; after which it takes up the history of the Israelitish people only, and brings it down to the death and burial of Joseph, which are supposed to have happened about the year before Christ 1635.

### 2. *Exodus.*

The book of Exodus continues the narrative, begun in Genesis, to the Delivery of the Law from God to Moses, about the year 1490.

### 3. *Leviticus.*

The contents of this book are limited almost wholly to

legislative enactments. A few historical facts, connected with the principal subject of the book, such as the ordination of Aaron and his sons, are mentioned incidentally; the period occupied by these events is supposed not greatly to exceed one month.

#### 4. *Numbers.*

The book of Numbers comprehends the space of thirty-nine years, being, in fact, the whole period of the Israelitish wanderings in the wilderness from the year 1490 to 1451 before Christ. From the absence of chronological data it is impossible to ascertain the exact time of the events which happened in the interval between the Exodus of the Israelites from Canaan, and their entry into the promised land.

#### 5. *Deuteronomy.*

The time occupied by the events mentioned in Deuteronomy is limited to one year at the utmost, the 1451st year before Christ, in which the Israelites, having wandered forty years in the Desert, at length prepare to invade the land of Canaan. The last events related in this book are, the death of Moses and the succession of Joshua as leader of the Israelitish people.

#### 6. *Joshua.*

The book of Joshua comprehends a period of about 25 years, from B. c. 1451 to B. c. 1425, during which the able captain, from whom the book takes its name, subdued the Canaanitish nations, and divided their territories among his followers.

#### 7. *Judges.*

The chronology of the book of Judges is more uncertain than that of the preceding: it comprehends, probably, about the space of three hundred and ten years, i. e. from 1425 to 1115, but the want of chronological connection between the events which it relates renders it impossible to arrive at any more accurate conclusion.

8. *Ruth.*

This book gives us an account of the fortunes of Ruth and her family, during a space of ten years, immediately preceding the time at which the book of Judges ends.

9. 10. *The books of Samuel.*

The first of these books records the history of Samuel, who judged Israel immediately before the election of a king, together with the reign of king Saul, a period as is supposed of about 115 years, from 1170 to 1055.

The second book of Samuel comprises the reign of David, which lasted 40 years, from 1055 to 1015.

11. 12. *The two books of Kings.*

The narrative is continued from 1016, the year of David's death, in the first of these books, down to the death of Jehoshaphat, in 889, and, in the second book of Kings, from the year last-named, to the thirty-seventh year of the captivity of Jehoiachim king of Judah, coinciding with the 562nd year before Christ.

13. 14. *The two books of Chronicles.*

The first book of Chronicles contains a series of genealogical tables, followed by a variety of events that happened in the reign of David, which is stated to have lasted 40 years, from 1055 to 1015. The second book of Chronicles contains the whole Jewish history from the accession of Solomon in 1015 to the decree of Cyrus in 536. Many of the facts which it relates are mentioned in the books of Kings; but others are new.

15. *Ezra.*

The book of Ezra comprehends the space of 80 years from the decree of Cyrus to the year B. c. 456.

16. *Nehemiah.*

This book takes up the history ten years after the conclusion of Ezra, i. e. in 446, and brings it down to about the year B. c. 434.

17. *Esther.*

This book comprises the history of only 12 years from



B. C. 521 to 509. A book, purporting to be the concluding portion of Esther, is found in the Apocrypha.

### 18. *Job*.

The chronology of this book is altogether unknown; and it partakes of a didactic, if not a poetic, rather than of an historic character.

### 19. *Psalms* — 20. *Proverbs* — 21. *Ecclesiastes* — 22. *Solomon's Song*.

These four books contain few direct historical allusions: they are supposed to have been mostly written by David and his son Solomon; i. e. between the years 1056 and 975 before Christ; though some are of a later date, as for instance the 137th Psalm, which was certainly written after or during the Babylonish Captivity.

### 23 to 39. *The seventeen prophetical books*.

The seventeen prophetical books contain many historical facts, though they are not of a strictly historical nature. They are not arranged chronologically in our Bibles, but as they will be cited in this work for historical purposes only, it will be useful to place them in the order of time, as follows:

Jonah is said to have written between	856	and	784
Amos . . . . .	810	—	785
Hosea. . . . .	810	—	725
Isaiah . . . . .	810	—	698
Joel . . . . .	810	—	650
Micah. . . . .	758	—	699
Nahum . . . . .	720	—	698
Zephaniah . . . . .	640	—	602
Jeremiah . . . . .	628	—	586
Habakkuk . . . . .	612	—	598
Daniel. . . . .	606	—	534
Obadiah . . . . .	588	—	583
Ezekiel . . . . .	595	—	536
Haggai . . . . .	520	—	518



Zechariah	.	.	.	.	.	520	—	517
Malachi	.	.	.	.	.	436	—	397

As the present enquiry is not extended to the Apocryphal Books of the Old Testament, it is unnecessary to include them in this chronological summary.

### CHAPTER III.

THAT THE BOOKS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT ARE NOT 39  
IN NUMBER, BUT 17 ONLY.

Although the Old Testament is divided into 39 parts or books, yet we must not understand that it contains 39 separate works, unconnected in their subjects, or written by 39 different authors. In the Hebrew Bible are 22 books only, which is also the number of letters in the Hebrew alphabet. These 22 books were divided “into three classes; the first class consisted of five books, namely

Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy, which they called the Law : the second class consisted of 13 books, namely Joshua, Judges and Ruth, in one book ; the two books of Samuel, of Kings, and of Chronicles respectively, in single books ; Ezra and Nehemiah in one book ; Esther, Job, Isaiah, the two books of Jeremiah in one ; Ezekiel, Daniel, and the twelve minor prophets in one book ; these thirteen books they called the Prophets : the third class consisted of the four remaining books, namely Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon, which four books the Jews called Chetubim ; and the Greeks Hagiographa ; this class was also called the Psalms, from the name of the first book in it. \* ”

But we must not conclude that there are even 22 separate works, in the Hebrew Bible, but rather that this division was adopted for the convenience of reference, which would naturally be required in the case of so bulky a volume as the Hebrew Scriptures.

The connection between the number of these books, and the number of letters in the Hebrew Alphabet, demands to be noticed. We are not informed to what origin this fact is to be referred ; but the Jews have always been fond of allegory and similitude : hence we may suspect that the coincidence was not undesigned, but that it was contrived at the time when the Masoretic notes and points were invented, and when the Jewish doctors took so much pains to count the words and even letters contained in their Sacred Books. But this subject will be noticed more fully hereafter.

Some of these 22 books are to be considered as portions of the same work rather than separate works ; for, “ though Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy stood as separate books in the private copies used by the Jews in the time of Josephus, they were written by their author

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\* Tomline's Elements of Christian Theology, vol. 1, p. 3.

† “ It is not known when this division took place, but probably it was first

Moses," says Bishop Tomline, "in one continued work, and still remain in that form, in the public copies read in the Jewish Synagogues. These five books are now generally known by the name of the Pentateuch." As the public copies read in the Synagogues are undoubtedly more likely, than the private copies, to retain the original form of these writings, we may consider the number 22 to be reduced to 17, by the union of the first five, namely Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, into one.

But there is an ambiguity in the use of the word book, which must be carefully guarded against. Sometimes it means a whole work, whether divided into parts or not; sometimes it means a separate volume, and it has also a third meaning, that of part or division of a work, in which sense it is analogous to chapter, canto, part, &c. which are terms used arbitrarily by writers to denote the separate divisions of the same work.

Looking at the contents of the second or Prophetical class into which the Hebrew Scriptures were divided, we may enquire why the books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel and others, which certainly are Historical and not Prophetical, at least in our acceptation of the word, are included in the same class with Isaiah, Jeremiah, and the rest, whom we now, more appropriately, as might be thought, designate as Prophets. The answer to this question is suggested by the meaning which the Jews ascribed to the word Prophet, by which term they designated a teacher or poet, and not merely one who foretold future events. In this sense, Joshua and the Judges were called Prophets with no less propriety than Daniel, Jeremiah or Isaiah. That the Pentateuch was kept apart from that which follows it in the Hebrew Canon arose partly from the higher honour

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adopted in the Septuagint version, as the titles prefixed are of Greek derivation. The beginnings of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, are very abrupt, and plainly shew that these books were formerly joined to Genesis."

NOTE by Bishop Tomline.

which was due to their great law-giver, and partly from the fact that the whole of the Jewish Law was contained in those five books, which consequently were often designated simply as the Law, whereas the following books were merely histories of the lives of the teachers who successively ruled Israel after the death of Moses.

The third class, into which the Jews divided the books of the Old Testament, Hagiographa or Chetubim, contained neither Law nor History, but moral and didactic writings, with exhortations addressed to the people, that they should continue steadfast in the service and worship of their God.

It appears, then, that the Hebrew Scriptures, according to the copies which were publicly used in the Synagogues, were divided into 17 books only, though in all the versions which have been made of them, whether Greek, Latin, or in the modern languages of Europe, the number of books has been increased to more than the double of this amount. In all such cases, subdivision is the work of a later age, is never coeval with the original work. In the case of the Old Testament, the moderns have abandoned the ancient division of the whole volume into three classes, as unnecessary, and have, for the sake of convenience, adopted the more simple arrangement into books, the number of which, by minute subdivision, they have raised from 22 to 39 and upwards.



## CHAPTER IV.

THAT THE 5 BOOKS OF MOSES, WITH THE BOOKS OF JOSHUA, JUDGES, RUTH, I SAMUEL, II SAMUEL, I KINGS AND II KINGS, ARE CLOSELY CONNECTED, AND FORM A CONTINUOUS NARRATIVE.

If we examine the early part of the Old Testament attentively, we shall find strong marks of connection between many of the 17 books, which stand separate in the public Jewish copies. As the books of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy are admitted to have formed but one book in the Hebrew Canon, it is unnecessary to apply the present argument to them: but it is remarkable that the succeeding books, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, Samuel and Kings, are all as closely in continuation, the one of the other, as the five books before-mentioned. The book of Joshua is also in immediate continuation of Deuteronomy; and, in short so close is the connexion of all the early part of the Old Testament from Genesis to the end of the Second Book of Kings, that if it was all printed without division in one continuous narrative, it would be impossible for the most sagacious critic to restore it to the form which it now bears.

As this is an assertion of fact which can only be proved by adducing all the instances, it is necessary to extract the beginnings and endings of each book in succession from the close of Deuteronomy to the beginning of the Second Book of Kings. The reason, why I do not extend this examination further, namely to the books of Chronicles, Ezra and others, will be explained hereafter.

The book of Deuteronomy ends with these words:

And there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face: in all the signs and the wonders, which

the Lord sent him to do in the land of Egypt to Pharaoh, and to all his servants and to all his land ; and in all that mighty hand, and in all the great terror which Moses shewed in the sight of Israel.

The book of Joshua, which follows Deuteronomy, takes up the narrative exactly at the point where it terminates, in the following manner :

Now, after the death of Moses the servant of the Lord, it came to pass that the Lord spake unto Joshua the son of Nun, Moses's minister, saying, Moses my servant is dead, &c."

Our quotation from the end of Joshua must be more extended, in order to shew more clearly that it bears a similar relation to the book of Judges, which is the next in order.

And it came to pass, after these things, that Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the Lord, died, being an hundred and ten years old. And they buried him in the border of his inheritance in Timnath-Serah, which is in Mount Ephraim, on the north side of the hill of Gaash. And Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that over-lived Joshua, and which had known all the works of the Lord, that he had done for Israel.

And the bones of Joseph, which the children of Israel brought up out of Egypt, buried they in Shechem, in a parcel of ground which Jacob bought of the sons of Hamor the father of Shechem for an hundred pieces of silver : and it became the inheritance of the kingdom of Joseph.

And Eleazar the son of Aaron died, and they buried him in a hill that pertained to Phinehas his son, which was given him in Mount Ephraim.

Consistent with this extract is the beginning of the book of Judges, which opens thus :

Now after the death of Joshua it came to pass, that the children of Israel asked the Lord saying, "Who shall go up for us against the Canaanites first, to fight against them?"

After Judges comes the book of Ruth, which is very short, and gives us an account of her adventure and subsequent marriage with Boaz : it opens as follows :



Now it came to pass in the days when the Judges ruled, that there was a famine in the land.

If it be asserted that these words form a very appropriate exordium to a separate work or book; I refer the reader back to the nineteenth chapter of Judges, which, he will find, commences in a similar manner:

And it came to pass in those days, when there was no king in Israel, that there was a certain Levite sojourning on the side of Mount Ephraim, &c.

The history of this Levite forms the subject of the last three chapters of Judges, and is as much distinct from the rest of that work as the book of Ruth. The history of the Levite and the history of Ruth, are, in fact, a sort of episode to 'Judges;' both of them contain prominent events which happened in Israel 'whilst the Judges ruled,' and 'whilst there was no king,' which evidently are synonymous expressions.

Equally applicable to our argument are the books of Samuel and Kings, as will appear from the following extracts.

The first book of Samuel opens with the history of Samuel the last of the Judges:

Now there was a certain man of Ramathaim-zophim, of mount Ephraim &c.

It may be said to follow in chronological order, and to bear quite as close a connection with the book of Judges, as the history of Ruth, or that of the Levite which is admitted to form part of the book of Judges. It concludes with the death of Saul:

And when the inhabitants of Jabesh-Gilead heard of that which the Philistines had done to Saul; all the valiant men arose and went all night, and took the body of Saul and the bodies of his two sons from the wall of Bethshan, and came to Jabesh, and burnt them there: and they took their bones, and buried them under a tree at Jabesh, and fasted seven days.

The opening of the second book of Samuel is in the closest harmony with the preceding :

Now it came to pass after the death of Saul, when David was returned from the slaughter of the Amalekites, and David had abode two days in Ziklag, it came even to pass on the third day, that, behold, a man came out of the camp from Saul with his clothes rent, and earth upon his head, &c.

The book concludes with the words :

David built there an altar unto the Lord, and offered burnt-offerings and peace-offerings : so the Lord was intreated for the land, and the plague was stayed from Israel.

This is generally believed to have happened in the latter part of David's life. Accordingly, we find, the first book of Kings confirms that opinion and takes up the history where the preceding book had left it :

Now king David was old and stricken in years, and they covered him with clothes, but he gat no heat.

The book concludes with the reign of Ahaziah, thus :

Ahaziah the son of Ahab began to reign over Israel in Samaria the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and reigned two years over Israel : and he did evil in the sight of the Lord, and walked in the way of his father, and in the way of his mother, and in the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin : for he served Baal, and worshipped him, and provoked to anger the Lord God of Israel, according to all that his father had done.

But all the events of Ahaziah's reign are found in the second book of Kings, the beginning of which follows so closely the extract just made, that it is difficult to conceive the two books of Kings in any other light than as a continued history ; and it comprehends as we have seen in the last chapter, a space of about five hundred and forty years. The opening of the second book of Kings is as follows :

Then Moab rebelled against Israel after the death of Ahab. And Ahaziah fell down through a lattice in his upper-chamber that was in Samaria, and was sick, &c.

Thus all the writings of the Old Testament from Genesis to the two books of Kings form an uninterrupted narrative of events which are described as having happened first to the world at large from the Creation down to about 1900 years before Christ, and afterwards to the family and posterity of Abraham down to about the 600th year before the same era, when the tribes of Israel were torn by violence from the paternal land of Canaan, and carried to Babylon, where they remained in captivity until the first year of the reign of Cyrus king of Cyrus.

As no evidence remains to prove that the separate divisions, entitled Genesis, Joshua, Judges &c. are any more than consecutive parts of the same work, we are justified in viewing them in this light, until good grounds shall be adduced for disconnecting them. If it be necessary to say more on this subject, an illustration may be drawn from the case of Herodotus, who wrote a History of the wars between the Greeks and Persians, in nine books. But these *books* bear, each the name of one of the nine Muses, Clio, Melpomene, &c. and no one has ever disputed the unity of these books, the identity of their author, or the continuity of their subject.

Next in order to the books of Kings succeed the books of Chronicles, which certainly do not form a sequel, nor yet, strictly speaking, a supplement to the books of Kings, for they comprise the same period of history again, often in the very same words, and record many particulars omitted in the books which precede. Yet the beginning of Chronicles is remarkably abrupt, and its connection with the end of Kings is not more incoherent than is the relation which its own internal parts bear to one another. I propose therefore to treat of the books of Chronicles hereafter in a separate chapter, for the following reasons :

1. They do not connect themselves with the preceding books of Kings so as to form a continuous narrative, like all the other writings which we have just reviewed.

2. They contain so many allusions to the Babylonish captivity, that they must undoubtedly have been written after that event.

3. They are admitted by all the Commentators to have been written, as they suppose, by Ezra, after the Babylonish captivity, whereas most of the preceding books profess to have been written, before that great National Revolution.

The remaining books, which complete the volume of the Old Testament, do not at present require to be noticed.

## CHAPTER V.

THAT THE OLD TESTAMENT IS COMPILED FROM MORE

ANCIENT WORKS.

If the reasons produced in the last chapter are sufficient to establish the belief that the several books of the Old Testament are but different sections of the same work, and form a continuous narrative; so, also, are there other

equally strong reasons for believing that the Old Testament is a compilation, and not an original work. These reasons are all deduced from the books themselves, and may be classed as follows.

§ 1. *Interruptions in the narrative.*

1. The narrative of the Old Testament, though historically continuous from the end of one book to the beginning of the next, is, in other places, interrupted by the insertion of separate and complete histories, which are even “distinguished by such appropriate titles as, in any other volume of antiquity, would be acknowledged to point out the beginning of detached compositions.\*” Thus, at Genesis, ch. ii, verse 3, is concluded the account of the creation of the world with the words :

And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it ; because that in it he had rested from all his work, which God created and made.

“Then follows another brief history of the creation, the garden of Eden, and the fall of man, with an exordium which intimates a distinct and independent composition.

These are the generations of the heaven and of the earth, when they were created &c.”

“This book concludes with chap. iii. . . Chapter v begins with an appropriate title, which more particularly indicates a distinct and independent composition.”

This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him.

“Here again the history of the creation of man is briefly recited, as an introduction to this separate book, which is complete in its kind ; for it begins from the creation and concludes with the birth of the sons of Noah. May it not be regarded as a transcript from an authentic genealogical

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\* Davies's Celtic Researches, page 40.



table or pedigree, which had been regularly kept in the family of this patriarch ? ”

We have afterwards—“ These are the generations of Noah ” —“ These are the generations of the sons of Noah,” &c.

The reflections, which flow from these observations are obvious. Those which follow are taken from the Celtic Researches, the author of which has entered deeply into several subjects that will occur to our notice in the course of this volume.

These things I cannot but consider as internal proofs, that Moses has not only alluded to writings which existed before his own time, but has actually given us transcripts of some of the compositions of the primitive ages : and that the book of Genesis, like other historical parts of the Scripture, consists in a great measure of compilations from more early documents. May not these several books, which recapitulate the same events, and the matter of which has not been wholly forgotten by the heathens, be regarded as so many primitive records, adding mutual strength to each other, and reflecting mutual light, in the same manner as the books of Kings and Chronicles, and the narratives of the four evangelists ?

If we duly consider the matter contained in the book of Genesis, I think we shall be led to conclude that much of it must necessarily have been collected from prior documents. From example (Gen. xxii. 20.) Abraham receives information respecting the family of his brother Nahor. No reason is given why it was told Abraham : nor does any thing immediately follow, as a consequence of such information. But as the account related to Abraham’s family, we are left to conclude, that he recorded it ; and, *upon his authority*, Moses preserves the record. He gives it not as a subject of revelation, nor as the result of his enquiry amongst the descendants of Nahor, nor yet does he content himself with registering the simple fact, but he tells us *what had been told Abraham at such a time*. At a distance of 400 years, he transcribes the names of Nahor’s eight sons in due order, with some particular circumstances respecting them, *as it had been told Abraham*, and therefore, as it must have been recorded in some memorials in Abraham’s family. Moses must have possessed a very exact detail of the transactions of Abraham’s time. Hence the circumstantial account of the expedition of the four kings, of that patriarch’s treaties with the princes of the land in which



he sojourned, of his sacrifices, and of the promises he received, and the allusion (Ex. xii.) to the *year*, the *month*, and the *very day* on which he began his peregrinations.

In confirmation of the opinion advanced above, it may be observed, that history furnishes no instance of an exact chronology having been preserved, for a series of ages, by any people who were totally illiterate. Relative dates, and the enumeration of months and days, would soon become unmanageable in oral tradition : and the precise length of men's lives, and their age at the birth of their children, are circumstances not likely to have been the subject of immediate revelation to Moses. Yet his history of the primitive world preserves an unbroken chain of chronology, from the creation.

## 2. *Repetitions.*

In the several portions of which each book of the Old Testament consists, the same events are recapitulated, to the same general effect, and sometimes with the addition of fresh matter. The earliest instance of this is in the history of the creation, which is related over again three several times, yet putting the subject each time in a somewhat different light. The instances of similar repetition are so numerous that, if duplicates were rejected, the Pentateuch would not occupy more than half of its present compass. It is sufficient to name two or three notable instances which are the most difficult to be explained, except on the supposition that there once were earlier records.

The first which I shall adduce is the repetition of many parts of the Jewish Law, and in particular the ten commandments, which are first given in the 20th chapter of Exodus, and in such a manner that their insertion furnishes an example of a *break* in the recital, as well as of a repetition. The 19th chapter of Exodus ends with these words :

So Moses went down unto the people and spake unto them.

He went down, as we learn from the preceding verses, to caution the people not to come too near. There is nothing said of his going up again : but the next words to

these, which are certainly the words that God spoke to him, are :

And God spake all these words, saying "I am the Lord thy God &c."

The narrative is here plainly broken, and must be reunited by inserting an account of Moses going up again into the Mount: if, indeed, the narrative is continuous at all.

The ten commandments are again enumerated in the 5th chapter of Deuteronomy from the mouth of Moses, and prefaced by the admonitions of the lawgiver not to forget those commandments and the other parts of the covenant which God had given them. It cannot be supposed that Moses wrote them twice, though he may have recited them many times to the people, neither would a later historian have written them twice in an original historical work, but in a collection of narratives taken from earlier documents, it is plain that, to preserve the original words, as far as possible, many such repetitions would be unavoidable.

The whole of II Kings chap. xviii, ver. 13, to chap. xx, 19, is the same as Isaiah, chap. xxvi, verse 1, to the end of the thirty ninth chapter; the two passages contain the history of Hezekiah's alarm at the approach of Sennacherib, and God's vengeance on the Assyrian army. As it is impossible to say which of the claimants for these chapters is the real author, it is best to ascribe them to some third unknown author, from whom both have copied them.

The next instance of repetition is still more striking, because we fall into an inevitable dilemma, in endeavouring to explain it. The 36th chapter of Genesis contains a separate and complete account of the genealogy of Esau, entirely disconnected with what goes before, and with what follows. In the 31st verse of this chapter, we find the heading or title :

And these are the kings that reigned in the land of Edom, before there reigned any king over the children of Israel.

This verse and the twelve which follow, occur almost verbatim in the first book of Chronicles, chap. i, v. 43. This circumstance involves us in a double dilemma. Either the two documents were copied, the one from the other, or both were copied from a common original. It will not, I presume, be readily allowed that the author of Genesis copied these thirteen verses from Chronicles : though even this argument has been put forward \*; neither can I admit that the author of Chronicles, supposed to be Ezra, would copy from Genesis ; because Ezra is supposed to have written Chronicles as supplementary to preceding books, and not as copies from them : he is said also to have revised and amended all of the Old Testament for public use.

The same observations apply also to other chapters of Chronicles † which need not now be noticed. It remains, therefore, to suppose that the two identical accounts were drawn from some common source. Original authors seldom abound in repetitions ; two independent authors never use the same words to any great extent ; but compilers, out of respect to early and valuable records, retain them in their first shape.

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\* In the Age of Reason, thus : " It was with consistency that the writer of the Book of Chronicles could say, as he has said 1st Chron, chap. i, verse 43, *THESE ARE THE KINGS THAT REIGNED IN EDM, BEFORE THERE REIGNED ANY KING OVER THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL*, because he was going to give, and has given, a list of the kings that had reigned in Israel ; but, as it impossible that the same expression could have been used before that period, it is as certain as any thing can be proved from historical language, that this part of Genesis is taken from Chronicles and that Genesis is not so old as the Chronicles, and probably not so old as the book of Homer, or as *Æsop's Fables*, admitting Homer to have been, as the tables of chronology state, contemporary with David or Solomon, and *Æsop* to have lived about the end of the Jewish monarchy." This argument does not appear to me conclusive. The terms of the question certainly admit the supposition that Chronicles was copied from Genesis : but I believe both to be collections formed out of earlier writings, as stated in the text above.

† If the reader is curious to compare the books of Chronicles with other portions of the Scripture, he may do so without difficulty by the help of a bible having marginal references.

The thirty-first chapter of the first book of Samuel, consisting of thirteen verses only, is verbatim the same as the first twelve verses of I Chronicles, chap. x. The position of this tenth chapter of Chronicles is remarkable : it follows the preceding nine chapters of genealogies, without any preface whatever, leaving us to the only admissible hypothesis, that the writer of it copied two prior documents, leaving each to tell its own story. If Ezra wrote this, he either could not have revised the preceding and earlier Scriptures, or he did not publish both as an uniform work, or he published them professedly as a collection of separate documents and not as a homogeneous work. If Ezra revised the other books of Scripture, and then copying whole chapters from them, published these to the world as his own in the books of Chronicles, he was guilty of a plagiarism, which would be aggravated, not palliated, by the sacred nature of the subject. It would also be not only a useless, but a pernicious labour, to encrease the size of the Scriptures without adding to the value of their contents.

Comparing the argument of the last chapter with that of the present, I lay the stress of my observations upon this fact—that the divisions into books, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, &c. are arbitrary, and do not coincide with the real divisions which shew themselves in numerous places, by the abrupt change of subject, by repetitions, and other indications. In other words, where there is a continuity of subject, our present headings or titles make breaks, and where there is no continuity, the narrative is made to run on without interruption.

This is plainly the process of a compiler, or artist, who, having united his materials together, cuts them into different lengths for the convenience of use.



### 3. *Earlier writings are quoted by the authors of the old Testament.*

1. In the twenty-first chapter of Numbers, at verse 14, we find these words :

Wherefore it is said in *the book of the wars of the Lord*, "What he did in the Red Sea, and in the brooks of Arnon, and at the stream of the brooks that goeth down to the dwelling of Ar, and lieth upon the border of Moab."

The note to this passage in the family Bible is as follows :

Some ancient record of those countries, to which Moses refers : or, more probably, the following account of the wars of the Israelites, given in the sacred history, by Moses, and other inspired writers. *Pyle, Dr Wells.*

We shall have occasion to recur to these verses hereafter : at present I adduce them to show that the writer or writers of the Old Testament actually quoted earlier writings.

In the tenth chapter of Joshua is the account of Joshua's commanding the sun to stand still. At verse 13 we read :

And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies. Is not this written in the book of Jasher ? So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day.

The book of Jasher is again mentioned in II Samuel, i, 17. 18 :

And David lamented with this lamentation over Saul and over Jonathan his son. Also he bade them teach the children of Judah the use of the bow : behold, it is written in the book of Jasher.

2. In the first book of Kings, xi, 41, we read :

And the rest of the acts of Solomon, and all that he did, and his wisdom, are they not written in the book of the Acts of Solomon ?

The note attached to this passage in the Family Bible, is taken from Bishop Patrick :

The kings of Israel were accustomed to maintain some wise persons,

who committed to writing all that passed in their reign. Perhaps this practice was begun by Solomon; for we read not of any book of the acts of David. Out of these annals, the sacred writer of this book took what he thought most useful, and omitted the rest, which he did not judge so necessary and instructive.

Bishop Patrick, when he wrote this, must have forgotten the following extract from I Chron. xxix, 29, where the Acts of David are said to have been recorded in the same manner as those of his predecessors :

Now the acts of David the king, first and last, behold, they are written in the book of Samuel the seer, and in the book of Gad the seer.

The Chronicles of King David are also referred to in I Chron. xxvii, 24, and were probably the same book as the "Acts:"

Joab the son of Zeruiah began to number, but he finished not, because there fell wrath for it against Israel; neither was the number put in the account of the chronicles of king David.

The second book of Chronicles, chap. ix, 29, takes notice of the Acts of Solomon, and names three writers who recorded them :

Now the rest of the acts of Solomon, first and last, are they not written in the book of Nathan the prophet, and in the prophesy of Ahijah the Shilonite, and in the visions of Iddo the seer against Jeroboam the son of Nebat?

In the second book of Chronicles, chap. xii, v. 15, we have a new writer of Acts mentioned :

Now the acts of Rehoboam, first and last, are they not written in the book of *Shemaiah* the prophet, and of *Iddo* the seer concerning genealogies?

## II Chronicles, xiii, 22 :

And the rest of the acts of Abijah, and his ways, and his sayings, are written in the story of the prophet *Iddo*.

## II Chronicles, xx, 34.

Now the rest of the acts of Jehoshaphat, first and last, behold, they



are written in the book of *Jehu* the son of Hanani, who is mentioned in the book of the kings of Israel.

## II Chron. xxvi, 22.

Now the rest of the acts of Uzziah, first and last, did *Isaiah* the prophet, the son of Amoz, write.

## II Chron. xxix, 30.

Moreover Hezekiah the king and the princes commanded the Levites to sing praises unto the Lord with the words of *David*, and of *Asaph* the seer.

## II Chron. xxxii, 32.

Now the rest of the acts of Hezekiah, and his goodness, behold, they are written in the vision of *Isaiah* the prophet, the son of Amoz, and in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel.

## 2. Chron. xxxv, 25.

And Jeremiah lamented for Josiah, and all the singing men and the singing women spake of Josiah in their lamentations to this day, and made them an ordinance in Israel: and, behold, they are written in the Lamentations.

Besides these various books, the authors of which are named, we have the "Chronicles of the kings of Israel and Judah" referred to more than thirty times at least. Of the manner in which they are mentioned, the following is an example:

I Kings, xiv, 19. And the rest of the acts of Jeroboam, how he warred, and how he reigned, behold they are written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel.

The book of the "chronicles of the kings of Israel" is mentioned altogether in 19 places: — I Kings, xiv, 19. xv, 31. xvi, 5. 14. 20. 27. xxii, 39. II Kings, i, 18. x, 34. xiii, 8. 12. xiv, 15. 28. xv, 11. 15. 21. 26. 31. 36.

The book of the "chronicles of the kings of Judah" is similarly mentioned in I Kings, xiv, 29. xv, 7. 23. xxii, 45. II Kings, viii, 23. xii, 19. xiv, 18. xv, 6. xvi, 19. xx. 20. xxi, 25. xxiii, 28.

These quotations are found in our present books of Kings; and in the Chronicles are quoted, in a similar manner, “the book of the kings of Judah,” and “the book of the kings of Israel,”—or, unitedly, “the book of the kings of Judah and Israel”—they are mentioned in II Chronicles xvi, 11. xx, 34. xxv, 26. xxvii, 7. xxviii, 26. xxxii, 32. xxxiii, 18. xxxv, 27. xxxvi, 8.

In some of these places the subject admits the supposition that our existing books of Kings are referred to; but it also admits of the same view which has been taken above, namely, that earlier writings are quoted.

#### 4. *Different names of God.*

An argument in favour of the theory that the Pentateuch is a compilation from earlier records has been founded on the variation of name given to the Supreme Being.

In the first chapter of Genesis, to the fourth verse of the second chapter, he is called Elohim, ‘the Gods,’ which occurs 35 times, and he is there called by no other name. But in the rest of chap. ii, and in chap. iii, (except by the serpent, who calls him also Elohim) he is otherwise named Jehovah Elohim, which we translate the “Lord God,” and this name occurs twenty times.

The use of these terms [says Mr Davies] as here described, is, I think, a peculiarity which could not well have happened, in the original and entire composition of one age, one country, and one man. For however the mysterious meaning of the terms themselves may be discriminated, yet Elohim in the first chapter, and Jehovah Elohim, in the second and third, are evidently used in a synonymous sense, and precisely the same operations are ascribed to them. CELTIC RESEARCHES, p. 41.

Other appellations, also, as Adonai and Shaddai, are found in various parts of the Old Testament, and all designate the Supreme Being, with equal propriety. They appear to be independent of one another, and neither by metaphor, etymology or periphrasis, can be reduced to one origin, as Deity and Divinity from Deus in Latin, the

Supreme Being, and other similar expressions, which are found in all the modern languages.

## CHAPTER VI.

### CHRONOLOGICAL SUMMARY OF JEWISH HISTORY.

The Hebrew Scriptures contain the most ancient accounts now existing of the world and of the human race. On this head they are strongly contrasted with the historical writings of the Greeks, the Romans, and all other ancient nations that we are now acquainted with. I do not speak of those stupendous monuments which cover the plains of Arabia, Asia, and the East, or of our own remains at Stonehenge, Avebury and elsewhere. These, if we could read them, would probably tell us of events quite as ancient as those which are recorded in the Pentateuch; but the comparison, which we are instituting, concerns written records only, in which particular the Jews claim precedence over all other nations.

A brief sketch of the history contained in their Scriptures, arranged tabularly, from Genesis to Kings, may be of use to our present enquiry, and save the trouble of referring to the Scriptures themselves. The years given in the margin of our bibles, though in many places imperfect, furnish data for determining, with some degree of accuracy, the system of chronology generally received among the learned. The creation of the world is placed 4004 years before the beginning of the Christian era. The intervening dates of most importance are the following :

B. C.

4004 World created—Adam and Eve formed by God out of the dust of the ground.

3130 Lamech, the seventh in descent from Adam, born.

3074 Adam dies.

3048 Noah is born.

3353 Lamech dies.

2448 The inhabitants of the earth, except Noah and his family, destroyed by the Deluge.

2093 Noah dies.

1921 Abraham goes down to Egypt.

1706 Jacob and his family go to settle in Egypt.

1491 The Israelites are led by Moses out of Egypt.

1451 The Israelites are led by Joshua into the land of Canaan.

1427 Joshua dies.

The Israelites are governed by Judges.

1095 Saul is elected the first king of Israel.

1055 David becomes king of Israel after the death of Saul.

1015 David dies and is succeeded by Solomon.

975 Solomon dies, and is succeeded by Rehoboam ; but Jeroboam, at the head of ten tribes, revolts from Rehoboam ; and the kingdom is from this time divided into the two separate sovereignties of Israel and Judah.

#### KINGS OF JUDAH.

#### KINGS OF ISRAEL.

975 Rehoboam . . . . . Jeroboam

958 Abijah.

955 Asa.

954 . . . . . Nadab

953 . . . . . Baasha

930 . . . . .	Elah
929 . . . . .	Zimri
929 . . . . .	Omri
918 . . . . .	Ahab
898 . . . . .	Ahaziah
896 . . . . .	Jehoram or Joram.
914	Jehoshaphat.
892	Jehoram or Joram.
885	Ahaziah.
884 Athaliah. . . . .	Jehu
878	Joash.
856 . . . . .	Jehoahaz
841 . . . . .	Jehoash or Joash.
839	Amaziah
825 . . . . .	Jeroboam II.
810	Azariah or Uzziah.
773 . . . . .	Zachariah
772 . . . . .	Shallum
772 . . . . .	Menahem
761 . . . . .	Pekahiah
759 . . . . .	Pekah
758	Jotham.
742	Ahaz.
740 . . . . .	First captivity of Israel by Tiglath-Pilezer.
740 . . . . .	An inter-regnum.
730 . . . . .	Hoshea
726	Hezekiah
721 . . . . .	Second captivity of Israel by Shalmaneser.
698	Manasseh.
678 . . . . .	Third captivity of Israel by Esar-haddon.
643	Amon.
641	Josiah.
610	Jehoahaz.
610	Jehoiakim.
606	First captivity of Judah.
599	Jehoiachin, or Coniah or Jecouiah.
599	Second captivity of Judah.
599	Zedekiah.
588	Third and final captivity of Judah and of the remains of Israel.

- 536 Date of the edict of Cyrus, authorising the Jews to return into their own country.  
515 The Temple finished and dedicated in the sixth year of Darius king of Persia.  
457 Ezra goes up from Babylon to Jerusalem in the seventh year of Artaxerxes king of Persia.  
445 Nehemiah goes up to Jerusalem, in the 20th year of Artaxerxes.

## CHAPTER. VII.

### OF THE SEPTUAGINT TRANSLATION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

The Hebrew Scriptures were often translated into foreign languages, at a very early period; but no other ancient version of them, made before the Christian era, than the Greek translation commonly called the Septuagint, is now in existence. The earliest of the Chaldee Targums,\* i. e. paraphrases made, at a later period, in what is called the Chaldee dialect, for the use of the Jews themselves, when they had forgotten the Hebrew and afterwards spoke Chaldee, was written by Onkelos, who is supposed by Professor Eichhorn to have been contemporary with Christ,

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\* See the extract on the Targums in the Appendix.



though Bauer and Jahn place him in the second century after the Christian era. For our present purpose therefore, which is to ascertain, on credible evidence, the real antiquity of the Hebrew Bible, all these translations or paraphrases may be set aside; for the Septuagint alone, which is generally understood to have been made about 280 years before Christ, is a sufficient proof that the Hebrew bible, of which it is a tolerably accurate translation, was at that time extant.

A brief notice of the Septuagint translation will here suffice. When Alexander the Great died in the year 323 before Christ, his empire was broken up into its component parts. Ptolemy Soter, son of Lagus, became king of Egypt, and in 312 he gained possession of Jerusalem and the Holy Land, which continued 100 years under the dominion of him and his descendants. A vast number of Jews were carried captives into Egypt, where they settled; and learned the Greek language which was generally spoken in Alexandria. Ptolemy and his descendants were great patrons of learning, and there is no reason to doubt the assertion of Josephus and Philo Judæus, that the Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible was made, in the reign, if not by the command, of Ptolemy Philadelphus. With the critical questions, that may arise concerning the dialect, grammatical forms and peculiar idiom to be found in that translation, we have nothing to do at present. The existence of a translation—the Septuagint—made from the Hebrew Bible at that time, involves the inference that the Hebrew itself also was then extant, or the less probable conclusion that the Hebrew text is itself a version, and the Greek Septuagint the original. \*

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\* The fact, before noticed in page 5, that the Septuagint version comprises works, not found in the Hebrew canon, is of not much importance to this question; for the Hebrew originals of these apocryphal books may have once existed, and afterwards perished, as we know has happened to the books of Gad the seer and Nathan the seer.

## CHAPTER 8.

## VALUE OF CONTEMPORARY HISTORY.

It has been said that the authority of historical writings depends entirely on its being known who is their author. This, however, is not universally true; for many historical accounts, mostly fragments, and short treatises, are now in existence, the names of whose authors have perished, whilst the accounts themselves, being known by the antiquity of the MS. where they are found, or by other means, to be contemporary with the events, are of the greatest historical value. It is, therefore, more correct to say that an historical record is *more likely* to contain the truth, when we know not only who wrote it, but that its author had a good opportunity of ascertaining the truth of the facts which he relates. It is not, however, absolutely necessary that both these conditions should exist together; it is sufficient that an historical record can be traced back to the very time when the facts, which it relates are said to have occurred; in this case it becomes what is called Contemporary History, which is always considered more valuable than any other, though to give it a place among first-class historical documents, it is still necessary that we should know where or how the writer gained his information, and, if possible, we should know who that writer was. This will be evident from a few examples.

The campaigns of Julius Cæsar in Britain are related to us by the pen of that general himself, whose writings contain the only authentic records remaining of the events which happened whilst the Roman army was in this island. But several of the later Roman writers have recounted the same events, and their narratives, if Cæsar's Commentaries had perished, would have given us the only account of Cæsar's invasion and its consequences. In reading their histories,

we should naturally have asked the question where they obtained their information, seeing that they wrote, some 200, some 300, and others even 400 years after the events which they relate.

One more illustration may suffice. The Roman historian, Livy, wrote in the reign of Augustus: he recounts the actions of Romulus the first Roman king with the greatest minutiae, and he not only does not tell us where he obtained his information, but he even laments that all the early records of Rome were destroyed when that city was burnt by the Gauls. For this reason the early part of Livy's history is deservedly looked upon with suspicion and unbelief.

As an instance of the credit which is always given to a history, known to have been composed at the very time when the events which it records are said to have occurred, we may adduce the valuable history of the Peloponnesian war by Thucydides, who commanded an Athenian fleet during that war; the Retreat of the Ten Thousand by Xenophon, to whose military talents mainly was due the success with which that retreat was conducted; and in our own times the History of Napoleon's campaign in Russia by the Count de Segur, who served in that remarkable war.

It is evident, that the memory of an event, no matter what may have been its magnitude, must entirely perish from the earth, if all those who lived at the time, should die before the account of that event has been taken down in writing, or otherwise delivered to posterity, by monuments, coins, statues, and such other devices as the ingenuity of man has contrived. This remark does not, of course, apply to physical phenomena, such as the inundation of rivers, the falling of avalanches, the disruptions of mountains, earthquakes &c. all of which leave the most conspicuous memorials in the ruin which they create, and the debris which they leave behind them. It is true, also

that the works of mankind may also, in their remains, convey to future ages an idea of what they once were : thus the works of Roman art are still turned up by the plough throughout the whole of Western Europe, confirming, beyond a doubt, the truth of what we read concerning that mighty people, and verifying the prediction of the poet,

*Scilicet et tempus veniet, quum finibus illis  
Agricola, incurvo terram molitus aratro,  
Exesa inveniet scabra rubigine pila,  
Grandiaque effossis mirabitur ossa sepulcris.*

*The time shall one day come when in that soil,  
The ploughman, as he ploughs the earth with toil,  
Shall turn up helmets eaten out with rust,  
And gaze at mighty bones buried beneath the dust.*

But these imperishable records of the past cannot communicate to us the varied movements of human avarice pride, or ambition : they cannot trace the minute distinctions which separate the nations of the world : all the busy vicissitudes, which form the life and soul of that magnificent science, which we call written history, can not be wholly handed down to posterity, though they can be usefully illustrated, by the ruins which time makes of man's works, after their authors have perished. To perpetuate the acts, the inventions, and the wisdom of our species, no other instrument can be used but the pen of the writer,

That mighty instrument of little men !

It will be granted, then, that our estimate of an historical work must depend on the means which the writer has enjoyed of ascertaining the truth of the facts which he records ; supposing always that he has honestly employed his materials. If we apply this remark to the Old Testament, it becomes necessary to enquire, who are the authors of the several books, or—if we cannot ascertain who actually wrote them—whether it can be satisfactorily shewn



that the authors, whoever they were, had a good opportunity of knowing that they wrote nothing but the truth.

## CHAPTER 9.

### OF THE REPUTED AUTHORS OF THE SEVERAL BOOKS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.

In the introduction to the First volume of D'Oyly and Mant's edition of the Bible, I find the following passage :

The first five books of the Bible, commonly called the Pentateuch, were composed by Moses, as the concurrent testimonies of all ages declare ; and, as hath ever been firmly believed by the Jews, with whom the fact continues to this day to be one of the thirteen articles of their creed. The word "Pentateuch" is of Greek original ; being compounded of two words, signifying *five*, and *book* or *volume*. It was probably first prefixed to the Greek version of the "Septuagint" or seventy translators ; to denote Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and



Deuteronomy : all of which had been written by the hand of Moses in Hebrew, probably in the order in which they now stand, though not distributed by their author into books, but forming one continued work.

The same editors give us, compiled from Dr Gray and Bishop Tomline, the following remarks concerning the reputed author of the book of Joshua :

The book of Joshua continues the sacred history from the death of Moses to the deaths of Joshua and Eleazar, a space of about thirty years. It contains an account of the conquest and division of the land of Canaan, the renewal of the covenant with the Israelites, and the death of Joshua. There are two passages in this book which shew that it was written by a person, who lived at the time when the events happened. In the 1st verse of chap. v, the author speaks of himself as being one of those who passed into Canaan, by using the expression, "Until *we* were passed over." And in the 25th verse of the following chapter, it appears that the book was written when Rahab was alive : for it is said of her, "she dwelleth in Israel unto this day." There is not a perfect agreement among the learned, respecting the author of this book : but by far the most general opinion is, that it was written by Joshua himself. The five verses, giving an account of the death of Joshua, were added by one of his successors, probably by Phineas or Samuel.

As I shall hereafter enter more fully into the internal evidence which the book of Joshua furnishes, it is unnecessary to say more in this place concerning the two passages here quoted, as proof that the work is of a contemporary character. The extract is made at present, as shewing the opinion generally received concerning the origin of the book of Joshua and its author.

Of the book of Judges, the same commentators remark :

This book has been variously attributed to Samuel, to Phinehas, to Hezekiah, to Ezekiel, and also to Ezra, who is supposed by some to have collected it from the memoirs, which the several judges respectively furnished of their own government. It seems, however, most probable, that Samuel was the author ; who, being a prophet or seer, and described in the book of Chronicles as an historian, may reasonably be supposed, as he was the last of the judges, to have written this part of the Jewish history, since the inspired writers alone were permitted to

describe those relations, in which were interwoven the instructions and judgements of the Lord. That it was certainly written before the reign of David is proved from the following passage, chap. i, ver. 21, "The Jebusites dwell with the children of Benjamin unto this day:" for it is certain, 2 Sam. v. 6, that the Jebusites were driven out of the city early in the reign of David.

The assumed fact of David's expulsion of the Jebusites will be hereafter noticed.

### Of the book of Ruth :

The book of Ruth is so called from the name of the person, a native of Moab, whose history it contains. It may be considered as a supplement to the book of Judges, to which it was joined in the Hebrew canon, and the latter part of which it greatly resembles, being a detached story belonging to the same period. Ruth had a son called Obed, who was the grandfather of David; which circumstance probably occasioned her history to be written, as the genealogy of David, from Pharez the son of Judah, from whom the Messiah was to spring, is here given: and some commentators have thought the descent of our Saviour from Ruth, a Gentile woman, to be an intimation of the comprehensive nature of the Christian dispensation. We are no where informed when Ruth lived; but, as king David was her great-grandson, we may place her history about 1250 years before Christ. This book was certainly written after the birth of David, chap. iv, 22, and probably by the prophet Samuel, though some have attributed it to Hezekiah, and others to Ezra. The subject of it is of so private a nature, that, at the time of its being written, the generality of people might not have thought it worth recording.

### Of the first book of Samuel :

The Hebrews suppose that Samuel wrote the twenty-four first chapters of the first book, and that the rest were added by the prophets Gad and Nathan. This opinion is founded on these words in the first book of Chronicles, chap. xxix, 29, "Now the acts of David the king, first and last, behold, they are written in the book of Samuel the seer, and in the book of Nathan the prophet, and in the book of Gad the seer:" and it is approved by many writers of considerable authority. We may therefore assent to this general opinion, that Samuel was the author of at least the greater part of the first book, and that he probably composed it towards the latter end of his life.

Nothing is said by the commentators above-mentioned

concerning the author of the second book [of Samuel, but in Bishop Tomline's *Elements of Christian Theology*, vol. i, p. 87, we find the following passage :

The second book of Samuel continues the history of David, after the death of Saul, through a space of 40 years. It was probably written, as was just now observed, by Gad and Nathan, but it is impossible to assign to them their respective parts.

The same writer, as quoted by the editors of the Bible before-mentioned, speaks of the two books of Kings in the following manner :

The two books of Kings formed only one in the Hebrew canon. They cannot be positively ascribed to any particular author : some have ascribed them to Jeremiah, some to Isaiah ; and some, again, with more probability, suppose them to have been compiled by Ezra, from the records which were regularly kept, both in Jerusalem and Samaria, of all public transactions. These records appear to have been made by the contemporary prophets, and frequently derived their names from the kings whose history they contain. They are mentioned in many parts of Scripture : thus, in the first book of Kings, we read of the book of the Acts of Solomon, which is supposed to have been written by Nathan, Abijah, and Iddo. We elsewhere read, that Shemaiah the prophet and Iddo the seer, wrote the acts of Rehoboam ; that Jehu wrote the acts of Jehoshaphat, and Isaiah those of Uzziah and Hezekiah. We may therefore conclude, that from these public records, and other authentic documents, were composed the two books of Kings ; and the uniformity of their style favours the opinion of their being put into their present shape by the same person.

The two books of Chronicles are prefaced in the same Family Bible as follows :

The two books of Chronicles formed but one in the Hebrew canon, which was called the book of Diaries or Journals. In the Septuagint version they were called, the books of " things omitted ; " and they were first named the books of Chronicles by St Jerome. They are supposed to be designed as a kind of supplement to the preceding books of Scripture, to supply such important particulars as had been omitted, because inconsistent with the plan of former books. They are generally, and with much probability, attributed to Ezra, whose book which bears his name is written with a similar style of expression, and appears to be



a continuation of them. Ezra may have compiled these books, by the assistance of Haggai and Nehemiah, from historical records, and the accounts of contemporary prophets.

### The book of Ezra :

This book derives its name from Ezra the author of it.

### Nehemiah :

The book of Nehemiah being subjoined in the Hebrew canon to that of Ezra as a continuation of his history, was often considered as his work : and in the Latin and Greek Bibles it is called the second book of Ezra ; but it undoubtedly was written by Nehemiah, for he professes himself the author of it in the beginning, and uniformly speaks in the first person.

### The book of Esther :

The author of the book is not certainly known. Some of the Fathers suppose it to have been written by Ezra ; others contend that it was composed by Joachim, high-priest of the Jews, and grandson of Josedech. The Talmudists ascribe it to the joint labours of the great synagogue, which succeeded Ezra in the superintendence of the canon of Scripture. The 20th verse of the 9th chapter of the book has led others to believe that Mordecai was the author ; but what is there related to have been written by him, seems only to refer to the circular letter which he distributed. There are, lastly, other writers who maintain that the book was the production of Esther's and Mordecai's united industry ; and probably they may have communicated an account of events so interesting to the whole nation, to the great synagogue at Jerusalem, some of the members of which may with great reason be supposed to have digested the information thus received into its present form. We have, however, no sufficient evidence to determine, nor is it, perhaps, of much importance to ascertain precisely, who was the author : but that the book contains a genuine and faithful description of what did actually happen, is certain, not only from its admission into the canon, but also from the institution of the feast of Purim, which from its first establishment has been regularly observed as an annual solemnity, on the 14th and 15th of the month Adar, in commemoration of the great deliverance which Esther, by her interest, had procured ; and which is even now celebrated among the Jews with many peculiar ceremonies, and with rejoicings even to intoxication. This festival was called Purim, or the feast of lots, (Pur in the Persian language signifying a *lot*,) from the events mentioned in chap. iii, 7 ; ix, 24.

## Job :

It appears probable that Job himself was the writer of his own story.....If we allow Job himself to have been the writer of the book, there will be evidently two advantages hereby gained to it: as first, that all objections to the historical truth of it will vanish at once. &c. &c.

## Psalms :

The book of Psalms, that is, the book of Hymns of Praises of the Lord, contains the productions of different writers. These productions are called however the Psalms of David, because a great part of them were composed by him. Some of them were perhaps penned before, and some after, the time of David; but all of them by persons under the influence of the Holy Ghost, since all were judged worthy to be inserted into the canon of Sacred Writ. Ezra probably collected them into one book, and placed them in the order which they now preserve.

## Proverbs :

The Proverbs, as we are informed at the beginning, and in other parts of the book, were written, for the most part, by Solomon, the son of David; a man, as the Sacred Writings assure us, peculiarly endued with Divine wisdom. Whatever ideas of his superiour understanding we may be led to form by the particulars recorded of his judgment and attainments, we shall find them amply justified on perusing the works which remain, and give testimony of his abilities. This enlightened monarch, being desirous of employing the wisdom which he had received to the advantage of mankind, produced several works for their inspection. Of these, however, three only were admitted into the canon of Sacred Writ by Ezra; the others being either not designed for religious instruction, or so mutilated by time and accident, as to have been judged imperfect. The Book of Proverbs, that of Ecclesiastes, and that of the Song of Solomon, are all that remain of the writings of him, who is related to have spoken "three thousand proverbs," whose "songs were a thousand and five," and who "spake of trees from the cedar that is in Lebanon, even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall," who "spake also of beasts, and of fowl, and of creeping things, and of fishes." If, however, many valuable compositions of Solomon have perished, we have reason to be grateful for what still remains. Of his Proverbs and Songs the most excellent have been providentially preserved; and, as we possess his doctrinal and moral works, we have no right to murmur at the lost of his physical and philosophical productions.



But it is not contended that King Solomon was the author of all the Proverbs contained in this book ; for

The Proverbs which are included between the twenty-fifth and thirtieth chapters, and which constitute the fourth part, are supposed to have been selected from a much greater number by the “men of Hezekiah ;” that is, by the prophets whom he employed to restore the service and the writings of the Church, as Eliakim, and Joah and Shebna, and probably Hosea, Micah, and even Isaiah, who all flourished in the reign of that monarch, and doubtlessly cooperated with his endeavours to re-establish true religion among the Jews. These Proverbs, indeed, appear to have been selected by some collectors after the time of Solomon, as they repeat some which he had previously introduced in the former part of the book. The fifth part contains the prudent admonitions which Agur the son of Jakeh delivered to his pupils Ithiel and Ucal : these are included in the 30th chapter. It contains, also, the precepts which the mother of Lemuel delivered to her son, as described in the 31st chapter. Concerning these persons, whose works are annexed to those of Solomon, commentators have entertained various opinions. The original words, which describe Agur as the author of the thirtieth chapter, might be differently translated ; but admitting the present construction as most natural and just, we may observe, that the generality of the Fathers and ancient Commentators have supposed that, under the name of Agur, Solomon describes himself, though no satisfactory reason can be assigned for his assuming this name. Others, upon very insufficient grounds, conjecture that Agur and Lemuel were interlocutors with Solomon. The book has no appearance of dialogue, nor is there any interchange of person : it is more probable that though the book was designed principally to contain the sayings of Solomon, others might be added by the “men of Hezekiah :” and Agur might have been an inspired writer, whose moral and proverbial sentences (for such is the import of the word Massa, rendered prophesy) were joined with those of the Wise Man, because of the conformity of their matter. So likewise the dignity of the book is not affected, if we suppose the last chapter to have been written by a different hand, and admit the mother of Lemuel to have been a Jewish woman, married to some neighbouring prince ; or Abijah, the daughter of the high-priest Zechariah, and mother of king Hezekiah ; since in any case it must be considered as the production of an inspired writer, or it would not have been received into the canon of Scripture. But it was perhaps meant that by Lemuel we should understand Solomon ; for the name which signifies one be-

longing to God, might have been given unto him as descriptive of his character, since to Solomon God had expressly declared that he would be a father.

### Ecclesiastes :

The book of Ecclesiastes is called in Hebrew "*Cokeleth*," a word which signifies one who speaks in public ; and which indeed is properly translated by the Greek word Ecclesiastes, or the Preacher. It is unquestionably the production of Solomon, who for the great excellency of his instructions is emphatically styled, "the Preacher:" for the writer of it styles himself, "the son of David, king of Jerusalem," chap. i, 1 ; he describes too his wisdom, his riches, his writings, and his works in a manner which is applicable only to Solomon ; and by all tradition, Jewish and Christian, the Book is attributed to him. It is said by the Jews to have been written by him, upon his awakening to repentance, after he had been seduced, in the decline of life, to idolatry and sin ; and, if this be true, it affords valuable proofs of the sincerity with which he regretted his departure from righteousness.

### Song of Solomon :

This book was written by Solomon, to whom it is expressly ascribed by the Hebrew title. It is almost universally allowed to have been a marriage-song of that monarch, composed on the celebration of his nuptials with a very beautiful woman, called "the Shulamite," the daughter, as has been supposed, of Pharaoh and the favourite and distinguished wife of Solomon.

### The Prophetical books of the Old Testament :

It is universally acknowledged, that the remaining books of the Old Testament, namely the sixteen prophetical books, and the Lamentations of Jeremiah, were written by the persons whose names they bear. The prophets profess themselves to be the respective authors of these books : and this internal testimony is confirmed both by Jewish and Christian tradition.

## CHAPTER 10.

THE CLAIMS OF MOSES TO THE AUTHORSHIP OF THE  
PENTATEUCH INVESTIGATED: FIRST FROM UNIVER-  
SAL CONSENT.

It is admitted by all who have examined this subject, that the earliest accounts and traditions of all nations are either wholly fabulous, or are so intermingled with fable that it is most difficult, if not wholly impossible, to distinguish the true from the false. Of our own island we know almost nothing before the invasion of Cæsar : and France, Spain, Germany, with all the rest of northern Europe, are envelopped in equal obscurity until the second century before the Christian æra. Rome herself, the conqueror and mistress of the civilised world, has nothing to tell us, which merits our belief until the third century before Christ : all the accounts of the 450 years preceding the Punic wars, are of so legendary a character that they convey no clear facts to the judgement, however they may furnish material for poetry to the imagination. Greece, also, the parent of European literature, becomes lost in darkness, anterior to the Trojan war ; and even that celebrated campaign of Europe against Asia, has been so adorned by the poets, that beyond the simple fact of its having happened, we cannot rely on any of the details which have come down to us. With the exception of Homer alone, who was a poet and lived 900 years before Christ, we possess no literary works except fragments and a few songs earlier than the History of Herodotus written about 500 years only before the Christian era. But from what we know of Grecian letters, it is admitted by all that they owed their origin to Phœnicia, from whence civilization and learning—such as they were—are said to have been imported

into Europe about 1300 years before Christ.\* Yet of the written records of Phœnicia, it may with truth be said that hardly a particle survives, beyond what has been preserved in the Grecian writers, Herodotus, Diodorus and others.

In harmony with this view is the fact that all the histories which we possess, to whatever nation they belong, become less credible in proportion to their antiquity; not that the writers have invented the facts which they relate, but that those facts, having come down to them by oral tradition only, have been so altered in the transmission from one mouth to another, that it becomes difficult to discern their first and original character. We may form some idea of this process, if we compare two separate narratives of the same fact, happening in our own times. It is rarely that such accounts tally, even in the features of that which they describe. It may, even, be doubted, whether a single isolated event, witnessed by two different persons, would convey exactly the same idea to the minds of both: but when the two come to relate what they have seen, to a third person, we can hardly expect that the descriptions will coincide in every respect with the original or with one another. What then will be likely to happen in the case of events which occurred three thousand years ago, and which have been handed down for a long time by no other than the uncertain mouth of tradition? We cannot be wrong in exacting the most scrupulous proof of a narrative which rests on such a basis: for though we may believe that he who has first written it, has faithfully told us what he heard from others, yet the picture, having been taken, not from the original, but from the last of a long succession of pictures, each copied from the other, we can no

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\* "B. C. 1313. Cadmus, a Phœnician, the founder of Thebes in Bœotia, introduces letters into Greece." Synchronistical tables of ancient History, Oxf. fol. 1815, p. 7.



longer depend upon the likeness; for, whilst it has lost some of its features by the treacherous inexactitude of one painter, it has probably gained others which the glowing imagination of a second has added, until at last it assumes an appearance entirely different from that which the prototype presented. To those who are conversant with the discrepancies, on the one hand, and the obscurity, on the other, which all Ancient History presents, the value of a Contemporary Writer becomes more and more apparent, and intermediate narratives, based upon tradition alone, sink proportionably in estimation.

But these remarks apply with much greater force to Eastern than to European History; and for a reason which Mr Clinton has stated with much justice and perspicuity in his *Fasti Hellenici*, [volume II, p. 373, *3rd edit.*]:

In the great monarchies of Asia, Oriental history has seldom been faithfully delivered by the Orientals themselves. In the ancient times, before the Greek kingdoms of Asia diffused knowledge and information, it is not likely that history would be undertaken by private individuals. The habits of the people, and the form of their governments, precluded all free inquiry and any impartial investigation of the truth. The written histories of past transactions would be contained in the archives of the state; and these royal records, drawn up under the direction of the reigning despot, would deliver just such a representation of facts as the government of the day thought fit to give; just so much of the truth as it suited their purpose to communicate. Of the authority of such materials for history we may judge, by comparing the account which has been transmitted to us from Ctesias of the rise of the Medes and the fall of Nineveh, with the very different account which Herodotus has left of the same transactions: the one utterly at variance with any thing possible, convicted of absurdity in every circumstance by the plain evidence of Scripture, the other confirmed by the same authority in all the particulars both of facts and dates. And yet Ctesias drew his narrative from royal archives; and in this part of his subject at least, had no temptation to wilful falsehood.

It becomes necessary, therefore, to investigate the grounds upon which the Jews have claimed for the authors



of their scriptural books the character of contemporary writers, and, to enter clearly into such an enquiry, it seems best to proceed seriatim through the several divisions of the Old Testament, beginning with the Five Books of the Pentateuch, said to have been written by Moses, who died about the year 1451 before Christ, just before the Israelites entered the land of Canaan.

The ascription of the authorship of the Pentateuch to Moses the Hebrew legislator, seems to rest upon the following arguments.

1. *Those books have always been supposed to have been written by Moses ; or, in other words, UNIVERSAL TRADITION asserts that Moses was the writer.*

2. *It is said, on the authority of the books themselves, especially of Deuteronomy, chap. xxi, 26, where Moses is described as saying*

*Take this book of the law, and put it in the side of the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, that it may be there for a witness against them,*

*that these books, i. e. the Pentateuch, written by the hand of Moses, were placed by him, not long before his death, in the tabernacle, under the custody of the priests, where they were preserved, either in the original autograph, or in an authentic copy, for many hundred years, and so have descended to posterity.* This is the argument to which the name of INTERNAL EVIDENCE has been affixed : and, in confirmation of this direct kind, have been cited certain texts of an indirect nature, implying that the same books were certainly written by some body who was situated like Moses. Thus, Genesis 1, 1, “on this side Jordan” is quoted to prove that the books must have been written in the wilderness, and, therefore, by Moses.

The first of these arguments is a question of fact, and must be determined, like all other facts, by positive evidence alone.

Tradition originally implied oral transmission, as opposed

to written testimony, and was in use before the art of writing was known ; but when we consider the great obscurity and even the glaring absurdities in which all History, previous to the introduction of letters, is involved, we cannot, I think, admit the validity of a tradition which mounts back through the period of fourteen hundred and fifty years, the interval between the death of Moses and the Christian era. But it seems difficult to say what is the meaning of the expression that tradition has always named Moses as the author of the Pentateuch. Our examination is not of the books of Moses alone, but of the Hebrew Scriptures or Old Testament in its totality, of which I hold the Pentateuch to be merely a division or section, and not a separate work. Taken in this light, coupled with the fact that all the tradition is derived from the books themselves, surely such tradition cannot prove the antiquity of that book. For besides the tradition derived from the Old Testament, there is none other for a space of thirteen hundred years after the time of Moses. In other words no other book exists which mentions the Old Testament until thirteen hundred years from the time of Moses. But let us wave this point, and hear what evidence tradition will afford. As the tongues which were the successive vehicles of this tradition, are now all silent, we can have no other mode of determining what they said, than by referring to what has come down to us in a written form : for tradition is a being of a very unsubstantial character, and soon expires, unless its words are perpetuated by being copied before their meaning evaporates : like the Common Law of England, and the unwritten laws of states in general, which, though termed *unwritten*, were nevertheless, at a very early period, taken down in writing, and so lost their original form ; for assuredly no other process would have preserved the knowledge of them to posterity.

In the case of a simple fact like that which we are now considering, namely that Moses was the author of the

Pentateuch; it does not appear how tradition can be an effective ground for such a belief; for, if the first person, who originated the assertion, could produce no proof of what he said, it is unimportant whether it has been repeated ten or ten thousand times, or whether one year or a thousand have since elapsed. We must therefore qualify the argument of tradition, and consider it to mean that in all ages since the time of Moses the Pentateuch has been admitted to have been written by his hand. To establish such an assertion, it becomes necessary to shew that a series of writers, beginning in the time of Moses or at least in the next generation, have ascribed to him the authorship of the book in question.

In support, then, of the claims of Moses, certain passages are quoted from the book of Joshua, which continues the Jewish History after the death of Moses, and it is thought that these passages allude to the Pentateuch, such as we now have it, proving thereby that this book was then in existence. Thus in Joshua ch. i, vv. 7, 8, we read the following exhortation addressed by the Lord to Joshua :

Only be thou strong and very courageous; that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest. THIS BOOK OF THE LAW shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.

Again, at Joshua xxiii, 6, we read :

Be ye therefore very courageous to keep and to do all that is written in the book of the law of Moses, that ye turn not aside therefrom to the right hand or to the left.

In another passage of the same book, chap. viii, v. 34, we are told that Joshua, the successor of Moses,

read all the words of the law, the blessings and cursings, according to all that is written in the book of the law: there was not a word of

all that Moses commanded, which Joshua read not before all the congregation of Israel.

From which passage, according to Bishop Tomline, “it is evident, that the Book of the Law, *or Pentateuch*, existed in the time of Joshua, the successor of Moses.\*” But this inference is certainly more than is warranted by the premises. It may be readily admitted as an inference from the passage above quoted, that the *Book of the Law* existed in the time of Joshua, but that the Book of the Law *was the Pentateuch* as now exists, does not appear so clearly from the words of Joshua. In drawing this distinction, I would impress upon the reader’s mind the necessity of his not confounding the authorship of a book with the truth of its contents. A book may be a true history, and yet not be the production of the author to whom it is ascribed. Further, it may contain the sentiments, laws, and deeds &c. of an eminent man, without having been written by him. Thus the Pentateuch may contain, and, I doubt not, does contain, the substance of all that Moses ever wrote—and is a correct account, as far as human things admit, of what Moses did and taught, but it does not follow from the words of Joshua above quoted, that the Book of the Law there mentioned is the very book which we now possess, called the Pentateuch, and subdivided into the five books called Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy.

An objection might indeed lie, as before observed, in conducting an enquiry like the present, which will extend to all the books of the Hebrew Canon, against receiving the testimony of Joshua at all; for we know the Hebrew Canon in no other form than as an undivided work, and the continuity of its contents, together with the sequence observed between each part of it and that immediately preceding, as shewn in a former Chapter, seems to

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\* Elements of Christian Theology, vol. i, p. 35.



favour the idea that it was compiled in one continuous narrative. If so, the testimony of its various parts is the testimony of that man only, who compiled it, and in a chain of chronological evidence forms one link only, and not a series of links. It might therefore be argued that no evidence of fact from one part of it should be admitted in support of another, at least in such a question as that which now lies before us, namely that of the concurrent testimony of ages; for it would be necessary, first, to prove that Joshua wrote the book which passes under his name or at all events that the book of Joshua was written in the age immediately succeeding that of Moses. If the book of Joshua was not written till some hundreds of years later, its testimony cannot be taken as contemporary or nearly contemporary testimony to the authorship of the books of Moses. But the weakness of the first link in the chain of universal consent is sufficiently apparent without breaking the chain altogether. I am content, at present, to rest my objection to the testimony of Joshua on the fact that the Book of the Law which he quotes is not proved to be the same as our Pentateuch: and I think that it can be satisfactorily proved to have been a different book from that which we now possess.

In the mean time we may admit the statement in Joshua to prove that in his time there was a certain book called the Book of the Law: but from this point the continuity of the witnesses is entirely broken; for we in vain search the books of Judges,\* Ruth, and the two books of Samuel for a continuation of the testimony not the most remote trace is to be found of the Book of the Law or its author.

If it be conceded that these four last-mentioned books

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\* We read in JUDGES i, 20. "And they gave Hebron unto Caleb as Moses said: and he expelled thence the three sons of Anak." But this language is too vague to fix the identity of the book of the law with our Pentateuch; it does not necessarily imply that Moses wrote any book at all.



were written about the time of David's death, which happened in the year B. C. 1015,—for this is the point at which the history contained in them terminates,—and if it appears that these books, the only surviving records of those five hundred years, make no mention either of the book of the Law, or of Moses its author, it necessarily results that the chain of testimony is interrupted, — fatally and hopelessly interrupted — and that we cannot, on the strength of it, prove the Pentateuch to be the Book of the Law, written by Moses.

But the whole drift and force of our argument will be made more clear by adducing whatever testimony can be found in the remaining Hebrew writers and others, after which we may take a general view of the information which they give us.

As the Second book of Samuel could not have been written before the reign of David, because it records the events of his old age, and some of the Psalms were written by David; the author of these Psalms, namely David himself, must be a little earlier in point of time than the author of the Second Book of Samuel; but neither does David, in the Psalms, nor his son Solomon, in the books of Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and Canticles, make the most remote allusion to the Book of the Law, so that they furnish no link by which we may re-unite the broken chain of Universal consent. It is true that David, in the Psalms, mentions Moses. The following are all the passages in which his name occurs.

Ps. lxxvii. 20. Thou leddest thy people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron.

Ps. xcix, 6. Moses and Aaron among his priests, and Samuel among them that call upon his name.

Ps. cv, 26. He sent Moses his servant, and Aaron whom he had chosen.

Ps. cvi, 16. They envied Moses also in the camp, and Aaron the saint of the Lord.

Ps. cvi, 23. Therefore he said that he would destroy them, had not Moses his chosen stood before him in the breach, to turn away his wrath, lest he should destroy them.

Ps. cvi, 32. They angered him also at the waters of strife, so that it went ill with Moses for their sakes.

The facts alluded to in these verses, certainly are found in our Pentateuch; but many books exist, containing histories of the same facts, without ever having been thought to be the same books. In fact we have seen in chap. 5, that the writer of the Pentateuch quotes other books, about the same transactions which himself records.

The author of the books of Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and Canticles, who is generally considered to be king Solomon, makes no mention either of the book of the Law or of Moses its author.

This observation brings us down to the year 1055 when Solomon began to reign over Israel, but with the exception of the poetical books, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and Canticles, generally ascribed to Solomon and his father David, we have no written records of any kind for nearly 300 years, until the time of Jonah who is supposed to be the earliest of the Prophets. But the book of Jonah makes no mention of either Moses or of the Law, and none of the other prophets have the most remote allusion to the subject, except Jeremiah and Malachi, in whose book of prophecies we find the following passages :

The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord, saying, Hear ye the words of this covenant, and speak unto the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem ; and say thou unto them, Thus sayeth the Lord God of Israel ; Cursed be the man that obeyeth not the words of this covenant, which I commanded your fathers in the day that I brought them forth out of the land of Egypt. JEREM. xi, 1—4.

Then said the Lord unto me, Though Moses and Samuel stood before me, yet my mind could not be toward this people. JEREM. xv, 1.

Remember ye the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments. MALACHI, iv, 4.

These words, however, give us no assistance in identifying the writings of Moses with the Pentateuch which we now have: and no other testimony can be found until we come to about the 37th year of Jehoiakin king of Judah, i. e. about the year 562 before Christ. As this is the last year mentioned in the books of Kings, it is clear that the writer of them could not have lived \* before that time. Concurrent with the two books of Kings are those of Chronicles, which are admitted to have been written by Ezra † after the Jewish captivity, i. e. about 500 years before Christ.

But between the time of Joshua, whose testimony to the existence of a Book of the Law has been admitted, on the supposition that he wrote the book which passes by his name, and the year 562 before Christ when the author of the books of Kings lived, is an interval of nearly 900 years, and, it will be borne in mind, as far as we have yet proceeded, no mention has been made by any intermediate writer of the Book of the Law, much less has any expression been discovered, by which it can be shewn that the book of the Law which they had then, and the Pentateuch which we have now, are one and the same book.

Let us, however, now see in what manner the writers of the books of Kings and Chronicles speak of the Book of the Law or of Moses, in the course of their narratives,

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\* I am justified in saying that the books of Kings were written after the Babylonish Captivity, by the admission of all the commentators. Take for instance the following passage from Bishop Tomline's *Elements of Christ. Theol.* vol. i, p. 25 :

“ It seems probable, therefore, that the books of Kings and Chronicles do not contain a complete compilation of the entire works of each contemporary prophet, but are rather an abridgment of their several labours, and of other authentic public writings, digested by Ezra after the captivity, with an intention to display the sacred history under one point of view, and hence it is that they contain some expressions, which evidently result from contemporary description, and others which as clearly argue them to have been composed long after the occurrences which they relate.

† The book of Ezra is, in fact, no more than a continuation of the Second Book of Chronicles : singularly enough the last two verses of Chronicles are the first two of Ezra and there is no break in the narrative.

wherein they relate the transactions of the two Jewish kingdoms from the time of David and Solomon down to the reign of Jehoiachim, and from that time, as recorded in Chronicles alone, to the end of the Babylonish Captivity.

The first passages in chronological order occur in Chronicles : David alludes both to the Law, and to the ark of the covenant, but not to the book of the Law. He says to his son Solomon :

Only the Lord give thee wisdom and understanding, and give thee charge concerning Israel, that thou mayest keep the law of the Lord thy God. Then shalt thou prosper, if thou takest heed to fulfil the statutes and judgments which the Lord charged Moses with concerning Israel. I CHRON. xxii, 12—13.

He addresses the princes of Israel in these words :

Now set your heart and your soul to seek the Lord your God ; arise therefore, and build ye the sanctuary of the Lord God, to bring the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and the holy vessels of God, into the house that is to be built to the name of the Lord. I CHRON. xxii, 19.

In the First book of Kings, ch. viii, v. 53. occurs the following passage in the thanksgiving to the Lord which the writer puts into the mouth of King Solomon :

For thou didst separate them from among all the people of the earth, to be thine inheritance, as thou spakest by the hand of Moses thy servant, when thou broughtest our fathers out of Egypt, O Lord God.

Also, in v. 56, of the same chapter :

Blessed be the Lord that hath given rest unto his people Israel, according to all that he promised ! there hath not failed one word of all his good promise, which he promised by the hand of Moses his servant.

In I Kings ii, 3, David cautions Solomon his son :

And keep the charge of the Lord thy God, to walk in his ways, to keep his statutes, and his commandments, and his judgments, and his testimonies, as it is written in the law of Moses, that thou mayest prosper in all that thou doest, and whithersoever thou turnest.

II Kings xiv, 6. But the children of the murderers he [Amaziah]



slew not : according unto that which is written in the book of the law of Moses, wherein the Lord commanded, saying, The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, nor the children be put to death for the fathers ; but every man shall be put to death for his own sin.

The corresponding account, in II Chron. xxv, 4, is almost in the same words :

But he slew not their children, but did as it is written in the law in the book of Moses, where the Lord commanded, saying, The fathers shall not die for the children, neither shall the children die for the fathers, but every man shall die for his own sin.

The name of Moses is mentioned in II Chron. xxiv, 6, under the reign of Joash, but not the book of the law :

And the king called for Jehoiada the chief, and said unto him, Why hast thou not required of the Levites to bring in out of Judah and out of Jerusalem the collection, *according to the commandment\** of Moses the servant of the Lord, and of the congregation of Israel, for the tabernacle of witness ?

In the reign of Hezekiah, a solemn festival was held in Jerusalem, and the law of Moses is mentioned by the writer of Chronicles, II, xxx, 15—16 :

Then they killed the passover on the fourteenth day of the second month : and the priests and Levites were ashamed, and sanctified themselves, and brought in the burnt-offerings into the house of the Lord. And they stood in their place after their manner, according to the law of Moses the man of God : the priests sprinkled the blood, which they received of the hand of the Levites.

In the corresponding chapters of the book of Kings, we find no notice of this festival, or of the law of Moses.

These texts require no comment : they contain mere notices of the book of the law, in connection with festivals and other events which took place in the reigns of the different kings of Israel and Judah. But the reader must continually be reminded that the histories in which these notices occur were not written or compiled until after the

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\* These words are not in the Hebrew.



Babylonish captivity, and consequently they furnish the testimony of that man only, who compiled them, at the distance of 900 years after the time of Moses. His words, moreover, do not indicate that the book of the law, as it then existed, was the same as our Pentateuch, but only that there was at that time in existence a book of the law, which passed under the name of Moses.

There are however, some remarkable passages in the books of Chronicles and of Kings, which have not been noticed, because they are of a very different character from the foregoing, for they seem to prove that the book of the Law was nothing more or less than the two tables of stone which God delivered to Moses on Mount Sinai. The first passage is as follows :

And all the elders of Israel came, and the priests took up the ark. And they brought up the ark of the Lord, and the tabernacle of the congregation, and all the holy vessels that were in the tabernacle, even those did the priests and the Levites bring up.

And king Solomon and all the congregation of Israel, that were assembled unto him, were with him before the ark, sacrificing sheep and oxen, that could not be told nor numbered for multitude.

And the priests brought in the ark of the covenant of the Lord unto his place, into the oracle of the house, to the most holy place, even under the wings of the cherubims. For the cherubims spread forth their two wings over the place of the ark, and the cherubims covered the ark and the staves thereof above. And they drew out the staves, that the ends of the staves were seen out in the holy place before the oracle, and they were not seen without : and there they are unto this day. *There was nothing in the ark save the two tables of stone*, which Moses put there at Horeb, when the Lord made a covenant with the children of Israel, when they came out of the land of Egypt. I Kings, viii, 3—9.

These words form part of the narrative concerning the building of the Temple and the arrangement of the sacred utensils and other furniture with which it was stored. Among the things, Solomon then placed in it, was the ark of the covenant, which had formerly been kept in the Tabernacle before the Temple was built.

It was in the side of this very ark of the covenant that Moses commanded the book of the Law to be placed, as appears by Deuteronomy, ch. xxxi, v. 26, and yet, when Solomon caused the ark of the covenant to be removed into the Temple, it is expressly stated in the passage which has been just quoted, that there was then "*nothing in the ark save the two tables of stone*, which Moses put there at Horeb, when the Lord made a covenant with the children of Israel, when they came out of the land of Egypt." How then is this discrepancy to be explained? If Moses put both the two tables of stone and the book of the law into the ark, and only the former were still there in the time of Solomon, it is manifest that the book of the law must have been removed in the interval; probably, it may be said, by the Philistines when they carried away the ark among the spoils of the defeated Israelites. If this be so, when was the book of the law restored? If it was never restored, how did the Israelites obtain the copy which we shall presently notice as having been carried round Judah by the order of king Jehoshaphat, and afterwards discovered in the temple in the reign of king Josiah? It may, also, be asked, why the Philistines did not extract the two tables of stone also; for these were still safe in the time of Solomon.

To these perplexing questions a simple answer may be given, which will solve the whole difficulty. The two tables of stone were the book of the law given by Moses, and besides them was no other: as I shall endeavour to prove more plainly in a future chapter. At present we will return to the point from which we have digressed, and proceed to shew that the writer of the books of kings makes no mention of the book of the law, which will enable us to identify it with the existing Pentateuch, but rather that his words exclude the possibility of such a book having then existed.

It has been observed that there are certain passages con-

nected with the notice of the book of the law, which bear upon our present argument. The first has been produced; the second is as follows: Solomon is still supposed to be speaking:

And the Lord hath performed his word that he spake, and I am risen up in the room of David my father, and sit on the throne of Israel, as the Lord promised, and have built an house for the name of the Lord God of Israel. And I have set there a place for the ark, wherein is the covenant of the Lord, which he made with our fathers, when he brought them out of the land of Egypt. I KINGS viii, 20—21.

This is a most important passage: it in every respect corroborates the explanation which has been given of the former passage: in the one we read that the two tables of stone alone were in the ark; in the other it is said that the covenant of the Lord was therein.

The two tables of stone were, therefore, the same thing as the covenant; the ark is from them called the ark of the covenant; it is also called the ark of the testimony. The book of the Law also is called the book of the testimony: and the whole matter is plain and intelligible; the Lord gave two tables, containing a summary of his commandments, to be the basis of the Jewish constitution and the foundation of all their morals and government. As a fitting receptacle for these *κειμήλια* or heir looms of the nation, an *arca*, ark, coffer, or chest, was constructed, and this chest was called the ark of the covenant, because it contained the two tables aforesaid, and nothing besides them. If the Pentateuch had been in existence, it would have made the two tables of stone no longer necessary: they would have been a cumbersome and useless load.

If, however, it should be argued that Solomon may have placed the book of the Law in the Temple, distinct from the Ark of the Covenant, I would ask where is the notice of this fact? It is impossible to prove a negative in any other way than by shewing that there is no proof of such a thing having taken place. But, if Solomon placed



the book of the Law in the Temple, so valuable a treasure might surely have been worth mentioning among the lamps, tongs, and other furniture which was then placed there. In the seventh chapter of the First Book of Kings, and the 51st verse, we read:

So was ended all the work that King Solomon made for the house of the Lord. And Solomon brought in the things which David his father had dedicated; even the silver, and the gold, and the vessels, did he put among the treasures of the house of the Lord.\*

But the book of the law, it seems, was not placed there; at least, there is no record of its having been so placed. It is more merciful towards the judgment of the wise Solomon to conclude that it was not in existence, than that, being in existence, this imperishable record was less esteemed than the silver and gold, and the lamps and the tongs with which the perishable fabric of the Temple was embellished.

About seventy years after the death of Solomon, Jehoshaphat was reigning over the kingdom of Judah. His prudent measures for reforming and instructing his subjects are related in II CHRON. xvii, 7—9.

Also in the third year of his reign he [Jehoshaphat] sent to his princes, even to Benhail, and to Obadiah, and to Zechariah, and to Nethaneel, and to Michaiah, to teach in the cities of Judah. And with them he sent Levites, even Shemaiah, and Nethaniah, and Zebadiah, and Asahel, and Shemiramoth, and Jehonathan, and Adonijah, and Tobijah, and Tob-adonijah, Levites; and with them Elishama and

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\* See the parallel passage in II Chronicles, iv, 19—23.

“And Solomon made all the vessels that were for the house of God, the golden altar also, and the tables whereon the shew-bread was set: moreover the candlesticks with their lamps, that they should burn after the manner before the oracle, of pure gold: And the flowers, and the lamps, and the tongs, made he of gold, and that perfect gold: and the snuffers, and the basons, and the spoons, and the censers of pure gold: and the entry of the house, the inner doors thereof for the most holy place, and the doors of the house of the temple, were of gold.”

Jehoram, priests. And they taught in Judah, and had the book of the law of the Lord with them, and went about throughout all the cities of Judah, and taught the people.

The emissaries of the king, it is here stated, *had the book of the Law*. Was there then only one copy of this book, and that the original which had been given by the hand of Moses? It would appear from this verse (which however has no corresponding notice in the books of Kings), that there *was* no other copy of the book of law, or the teachers who went through the country would not have been under the necessity of carrying it with them. Here too, if we suppose, as has been before repeatedly observed, that the book of the law was nothing more than the two tables of stone, all difficulties vanish; and the history is reduced to harmony with our antecedent notions respecting those primitive times, when writing consisted rather in monuments and inscriptions upon stone than in the more refined usage of books and alphabets, which, I purpose, in a future chapter, to shew, were not then invented. Meanwhile let us examine the last passages in the books of Kings and Chronicles, which mention the book of the law, the subject of our present enquiry.

The occasion on which the subject is revived is curious and has given rise to much discussion. The writer of the second book of Kings describes it as follows:

It came to pass in the eighteenth year of King Josiah, that the king sent Shaphan the son of Azaliah, the son of Meshullam, the scribe, to the house of the Lord, saying "Go up to Hilkiah the high-priest, that he may sum the silver which is brought into the house of the Lord which the keepers of the door have gathered of the people: and let them deliver it into the hand of the doers of the work, that have the oversight of the house of the Lord: and let them give it to the doers of the work which is in the house of the Lord, to repair the breaches of the house, unto carpenters and builders, and masons, and to buy timber and hewn stone to repair the house." Howbeit there was no reckoning made with them of the money that was delivered into their hand, because they dealt faithfully.



And Hilkiah the high priest said unto Shaphan the scribe, I have found the BOOK OF THE LAW in the house of the Lord : and Hilkiah gave the book to Shaphan, and he read it. And Shaphan the scribe came to the king and brought the king word again, and said "Thy servants have gathered the money that was found in the house, and have delivered it into the hand of them that do the work, that have the oversight of the house of the Lord." And Shaphan the scribe shewed the king, saying "Hilkiah the priest hath delivered me a book." And Shaphan read it before the king, and it came to pass, when the king had heard the words of the book of the law, that he rent his clothes : and the king commanded Hilkiah the priest, and Ahikam the son of Shaphan, and Achbor the son of Michaiah, and Shaphan the scribe, and Asabiah a servant of the king's, saying, "Go ye, enquire of the Lord for me, and for the people, and for all Judah, concerning the words of this book that is found : for great is the wrath of the Lord that is kindled against us, because our fathers have not hearkened unto the words of this book, to do according unto all that which is written concerning u . [xxi, 3—13.]

In the next chapter, (i. e. II Kings xxii,) is an account of the Passover which was held by Josiah, in consequence of this discovery of the book of the law. The chapter opens with these words :

And the king sent, and they gathered unto him all the elders of Judah and of Jerusalem. And the king went up into the house of the Lord, and all the men of Judah and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem with him, and the priests, and the prophets, and all the people, both small and great ; and he read in heir ears all the words of the book of the covenant which was found in the house of the Lord. And the king stood by a pillar, and made a covenant before the Lord, to walk after the Lord and to keep his commandments and his testimonies and his statutes with all their heart and all their soul, to perform the words of this covenant that were written in this book. And all the people stood to the covenant.

The whole of this narrative is confirmed by the writer of the second book of Chronicles, ch. xxxiv, v. 14, with the addition that the book of the law then found was *given by Moses,*" or, according to the marginal translation, *given by the hand of Moses.*

The Passover, also, is described in a similar manner, and

almost in the very same words, and the book that had just been found, is said to have been the model by which the ceremonies were regulated.

II CHRON. xxxv, 11-12. And they killed the passover and the priests sprinkled the blood from their hands, and the Levites flayed them. And they removed the burnt offerings, that they might give according to the divisions of the families of the people, to offer unto the Lord, as it is written in the book of Moses.

These then are all the notices which we find in the books of Chronicles and Kings, of the book of the law, given by the hand of Moses for the use of the Israelitish people. They may be analysed as follows.

In all those verses where no historical fact is related concerning the very volume itself, i. e. where there is merely a quotation from it, as in the words, “as it is written in the law of Moses,” we can derive no evidence whatever, concerning the nature of the book; because the writer of the history, living after the Babylonish captivity, and having the book of the law before him, may be supposed to have himself inserted these verses for the benefit of his readers. But from the relation of the events which happened in the reign of Jehoshaphat and Josiah, connected with the silence observed concerning any book of the law at all in the reign of Solomon, we are led, I think, to believe that the book of the law was only the tables of stone delivered by God to Moses on Mount Sinai. The facts are briefly these. In the reign of Solomon we have positive evidence that the two tables of stone were still preserved, but not the book of the law. In the reign of Jehoshaphat, 70 years later, the law is carried round the country for the general edification of the people. In the reign of Josiah, the law is found and revived. If these historical facts are correctly related, I cannot conceive any other inference to be drawn from them than that the book of the law and the two tables of stone were the same, and that besides them there was no other.

But whatever curious enquiries may be based upon these facts, whether the book of the law was different or not from the tables of stone, it is almost certain that there was but one copy in existence during the whole duration of the Israelitish kingdoms, and nothing has yet been adduced to prove that it was the same book, which we now call the Pentateuch. Indeed the writer who records these facts, living after the Babylonish captivity, can give us evidence only for the opinions which prevailed in his own age, and furnishes no link to re-unite the chain of tradition which has been broken for 900 years since the time of Joshua.

What a long period—nine hundred years ! Nations have arisen and past away : revolutions upon revolutions have been made and again forgotten ; empires have been formed and perished in half that time : languages have changed so totally that if those who lived at the two extremities of such a space could be brought together, they could neither converse with one another, nor have two ideas in common. Scarcely have eight hundred years elapsed since the Norman Conquest, and yet what changes have happened even in the comparatively stable and civilized monarchy of England. What then must be the case with the nation of the Israelites, a fugitive and half-barbarous people, escaped out of Egypt, governed first by a sort of theocratic chieftains called Judges, then a monarchy, and finally divided into hostile kingdoms ; and during the whole nine hundred years rent in pieces by intestine convulsions, such as never before or since distracted so small a community.

And, what strengthens this argument tenfold, is the fact that this long period of nine hundred years lies wholly in the regions of obscurity and not of civilization, it ends before civilization and learning commenced. In every country of the world, few records have been preserved, except the works of Homer and Hesiod, as early as even the end of this period of nine hundred years. It may with reason be doubted whether the Pentateuch or any



other volume copied by the pen, and of equal size, could be preserved entire and in its original state under such circumstances. But this is not my present argument; I only contend that the silence of nine hundred years altogether refutes the argument of that Universal Consent on which is based the belief that the book of the law, or the book of Moses, is the same as the Pentateuch which we now have.

Let us, however, hear what Dr Kennicott, the commentator on the Hebrew Bible, says concerning the book of the law found in the Temple in the 18th year of King Josiah.

The law, after being so long concealed, would be unknown to very many of the Jews; and thus the solemn reading of it by Josiah would awaken his own and the people's earnest attention. The copy produced was probably the original, \* written by Moses, which would excite still greater veneration. The distance of time was not such as to make it incredible that the copy now found was that written by Moses himself: for there was certainly not a greater interval from the death of Moses to the death of Josiah than 950 years; and we have manuscripts existing among us at the present day of greater age than this.

It is true, as the writer of this passage remarks, that we have manuscripts which are more than 950 years old. Perhaps in all the British islands there are twenty manuscripts as old as the 8th and 9th centuries after Christ: but I do not allow this comparison to be a fair one. Four hundred years ago the art of printing was invented, and

\* The following passage from Milman's History of the Jews, i, p. 316, shews that the able author of that work also considered the book of the law, found by Hilkiah, to have been the original copy delivered by Moses, or, at least, he seems to take it for granted according to the opinion which generally prevails.

"Josiah surpassed even his most religious predecessors, Asa, Jehoshaphat, Azariah or Hezekiah, in zeal for the reformation of the national religion. His first care was to repair the temple. While the work was proceeding, the king and the whole nation heard with the utmost exultation that Hilkiah, the high-priest, had discovered the original copy of the Law. But so little were its real contents known, that on its first reading, the king was struck with terror at its awful denunciations. The book was read in public; Josiah and all the nation renewed the solemn covenant with their God."

from that time manuscripts began to be less used: they have consequently been preserved as curiosities, and are no longer liable to be worn out by frequent use: add to which that there were several hundred convents in the British isles as early as eleven centuries ago, inhabited by thousands of men having little else to do but copy manuscripts. The whole of the last thousand years has also been marked by a taste for a certain sort of literature, such as it was, and all the countries in Europe have been occupied in a similar way: thereby producing a mutual encouragement and emulation in the multiplication of manuscripts. But in the case of the Israelites, it was far otherwise: all their history during the first half of the nine hundred years is described in the book of Judges, and it gives us a most extraordinary picture of barbarous tribes, engaged in nothing but seditions and intestine wars. In reading that history, we cannot find the briefest interval, between the tales of blood, for learning or the polite arts: books seem to have been utterly unknown, and even the Book of the Law, to which the Jews in more recent times have shewn such reverence, is not even once mentioned, either by David, Solomon, or any of the early Jewish writers during the whole space of 900 years from the time of Joshua to the end of the Babylonish captivity, 500 years only before the Christian era.

Let us notice the back-ground of this picture. Ezra the scribe was a ready writer conversant with the law of God. Nehemiah, also, was an able and learned teacher of the Jews, *after the Babylonish captivity*: and in all the writings, which they are generally admitted to have composed, the book of the law is mentioned, as becomes so valuable a treasure. This will be evident from the ensuing extracts taken from the books which pass under the names of Ezra and Nehemiah.

EZRA iii, 2. Then stood up Jeshua the son of Jozadak, and his brethren the priest, and Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel and his brethren,



and builded the altar of the God of Israel, to offer burnt offerings thereon, as it is written in the law of Moses the man of God.

— vii, 6. This Ezra went up from Babylon ; and he was a ready scribe in the law of Moses, which the Lord God of Israel had given : and the king granted him all his request, according to the hand of the Lord his God upon him.

NEHEMIAH, i, 7. We have dealt very corruptly against thee, and have not kept the commandments, nor the statutes, nor the judgements, which thou commandedst thy servant Moses.

— viii. 1—3. And all the people gathered themselves together as one man into the street that was before the water-gate ; and they spake unto Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses which the Lord had commanded to Israel. And Ezra the priest brought the law before the congregation both of men and woman, and all that could hear with understanding, upon the first day of the seventh month. And he read therein before the street that was before the water-gate from the morning until mid-day, before the men and the women, and those that could understand : and the ears of all the people were attentive unto the book of the law.

— viii, 7. Also Jeshua and Bani, and Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodijah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, and the Levites, caused the people to understand the law, and the people stood in their place. So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading.....

And they found written in the law which the Lord had commanded by Moses, that the children of Israel should dwell in booths in the feast of the seventh month : And that they should publish and proclaim in all their cities, and in Jerusalem, saying “ Go forth unto the mount and fetch olive-branches, and pine-branches, and myrtle-branches, and palm-branches, and branches of thick trees, to make booths, as it is written. So the people went forth, and brought them, and made themselves booths, every one upon the roof of his house, and in their courts, and in the courts of the house of God, and in the street of the water-gate and in the street of the gate of Ephraim. And all the congregation of them that were come again out of the captivity made booths, and sat under the booths : for since the days of Joshua the son of Nun unto that day had not the children of Israel done so : and there was very great

gladness. Also day by day from the first day unto the last day, he read in the book of the law of God. And they kept the feast seven days; and on the eighth day was a solemn assembly, according unto the manner.

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From the Jewish writers we must now turn to the Greeks and Romans, among whom literature had hardly begun to make its appearance, at the very time that the canon of the Jewish Scriptures was brought to its termination. Malachi, the last of the prophets, wrote the short book which bears his name about the year B. C. 400. No Grecian writer, however, has mentioned the Israelites or their sacred books until long after that period. Even the conquests of Alexander did not open any communication between his countrymen and the Jews. It is in the reign of the Ptolemies, kings of Egypt, that the two nations are first brought into connection. The Bible was then [about the year B. C. 280], as we have seen in a previous chapter, translated into Greek for the use of the Jews who lived in Alexandria, and were better acquainted with the Greek than the Hebrew language. This is sufficient to account for the appearance of a Greek translation of the Bible at so early a date as the beginning of the third century before Christ: but the Hebrews have wished us to believe that the execution of that laborious work is due principally to the admiration which King Ptolemy felt towards the sublime truths contained in their sacred books. It is impossible at this distance of time, to determine how far these motives operated, for not a particle of evidence has come down to us: neither has any Grecian or Roman writer made the most remote allusion to Moses, or his writings, and few of them have even mentioned the name of the Israelitish people, until about the time of the Christian era,

when Herod the Great was made king of Judea, and kept up a constant correspondence with his friend Augustus and the court of Rome.

One of the most intimate friends of Herod was Nicolaus of Damascus, a peripatetic philosopher, poet and historian of considerable eminence. Of his extensive works nothing but fragments has survived: but extracts from his writings have been preserved by Josephus, in one of which reference is made to Moses the lawgiver of the Jews, and his writings. I subjoin the whole extract in the original Greek together with an English translation:

Τοῦ δὲ κατακλυσμοῦ τούτου καὶ τῆς λάρνακος μέμνηται πάντες οἱ τὰς Βαρβαρικὰς ἱστορίας ἀναγεγραφίτες, ὧν ἔστι καὶ Βηρωσσὸς ὁ Χαλδαῖος· διηγούμενος γὰρ τὰ περὶ τὸν κατακλυσμὸν οὕτω που διέξεισι,

Λέγεται δὲ καὶ τοῦ πλοίου ἐν τῇ Ἀρμενίᾳ πρὸς τῷ ὄρει τῶν Κορδυαίων ἔτι μέρος τι εἶναι, καὶ κομίζειν τινὰς τῆς ἀσφάλτου ἀφαιροῦντας. χρωῖνται δὲ μάλιστα οἱ ἄνθρωποι τῷ κομιζομένῳ πρὸς τοὺς ἀποτροπιασμούς.

Μέμνηται δὲ τούτων καὶ Ἱερώνυμος ὁ τὴν ἀρχαιολογίαν τὴν Φοινικικὴν συγγραφάμενος, καὶ Μνασέας δὲ, καὶ ἄλλοι πλείους. Καὶ Νικόλαος δὲ ὁ Δαμασκηνὸς ἐν τῇ ἐνενηκοστῇ καὶ ἑκτῇ βίβλῳ ἱστορεῖ περὶ αὐτῶν, λέγων οὕτως·

Ἔστιν ὑπὲρ τὴν Μινυάδα μέγα ὄρος κατὰ τὴν Ἀρμενίαν, Βάρις λεγόμενον, εἰς ὃ πολλοὺς συμφυγόντας ἐπὶ τοῦ κατακλυσμοῦ λόγος ἔχει περισωθῆναι, καὶ τινὰ ἐπὶ λάρνακος ὀχοούμενον ἐπὶ τὴν ἀκρώρειαν ὀκεῖλαι, καὶ τὰ λείψανα τῶν ξυλῶν ἐπὶ πολὺ σωθῆναι· γένοιτο δ' ἂν οὗτος, ὅντινα καὶ Μωϋσῆς ἀνέγραψεν ὁ Ἰουδαίων νομοθετῆς.\*

All those who have written the barbarian (i. e. profane) histories, mention this deluge: one of them is Berosus the Chaldean; in relating about the deluge he proceeds thus:

It is said that there is still remaining a portion of the ark in Armenia, at the mountain of the Corduæans, and that people take off and carry away with them the bitumen: using what they carry away, principally as charms.

Hieronimus, who compiled the archæology of Phœnicia, and Mnaseas, and several others mention these things. Nicolaus of Damascus, also, in his 96th book, speaks of them thus:

\* Ant. Jud. lib. i, cap. 3.

There is above the Minyad a great mountain, in Armenia, called Baris, to which it is said that many fled in the time of the deluge and were saved, and that one of them, floating in a chest, came to land at its top, and that fragments of its timbers were long preserved. This may be the man whom Moses the lawgiver of the Jews mentioned.

Contemporary with Nicolaus was Alexander Polyhistor, quoted by Josephus.\*

*Μαρτυρεῖ δέ μου τῷ λόγῳ καὶ Ἀλέξανδρος ὁ Πολυΐστωρ, λέγων οὕτως·*

*Κλεόδημος δὲ φησὶν ὁ προφήτης, ὁ καὶ Μάλχος, ὁ ἱστορῶν τὰ περὶ Ἰουδαίων, καθὼς καὶ Μωϋσῆς ἱστόρησεν ὁ νομοθέτης αὐτῶν, ὅτι ἐκ τῆς Χατούρας Ἀβράμῳ ἐγένοντο παῖδες ἱκανοί.*

What I have said is confirmed by Alexander Polyhistor, whose words are these:

It is said by Cleodemus the prophet, who is also called Malchas, and who wrote about the Jews, in the same way as Moses their law-giver has recorded, that Abraham had many children by Keturah.

These extracts may suffice as specimens of the notice which profane writers have taken of the Jewish Scriptures. To those which I have here given might be added a few lines from Diodorus Siculus and others, but as none of them lived earlier than about the beginning of the Christian era, their evidence has nothing to do with our present subject, which is to shew, not that the Old Testament did not exist before the Christian era, but that it was compiled since the termination of the Babylonish captivity.

After the beginning of the Christian era, we have many notices both of Moses and of the Pentateuch, or at least of a book, which at that time existed and which professed to have Moses for its author. Strabo and Galen among the Greeks, Justin, Pliny and Tacitus among the Latins, make frequent allusion to the book of Moses, besides many other writers whose testimony it is unnecessary to adduce. It was to be expected that the introduction of Christianity

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\* Ant. Jud. lib. i, cap. 15.



into Europe would bring with it a knowledge of the Hebrew Scriptures, on which Christianity is based, as on a foundation stone. It was also to be anticipated that all later writers who should mention the Pentateuch would speak of it as the book of Moses, because for a long time previous to the Christian era the Jews themselves considered the Pentateuch to be the original work as it came from the hand of Moses. It is not essential to our argument to follow the chain of evidence which later writers furnish, because it cannot be denied that the Pentateuch existed long before this latter half of the chain of evidence commences. I have endeavoured to shew, not that the chain of Universal consent is broken after it reaches the period of the Christian era, but that it cannot be traced during the fifteen hundred years which elapsed before the Christian era, and after the death of Moses. It may be useful, in order to make this the more forcible, to recapitulate the heads of our enquiry, i. e. to recapitulate the several notices of Moses and the book in question, which occur in the Hebrew Bible between the death of Moses and the last of the sacred writers.

1. It has been admitted that *a Book of the law* is twice named in the Book of Joshua, which is said to have been written in the next generation after Moses. I have reserved the right to shew hereafter that the book of Joshua was not written until several hundred years after the date usually ascribed to it. 2. The second link in the chain is found in the author of the Books of Kings and Chronicles which were written about the time of the Babylonish captivity : i. e. 900 years after the death of Moses.

*These are the only two Jewish writers who mention the book of the law at all for the long period of 900 years, and probably much longer!*

But the argument derived from this fact, must be reduced to still narrower dimensions ; for the authors of Kings and Chronicles describe facts, which prove, to a demon-

stration, that the Pentateuch which we now have is not the book of the law, as given by Moses. They tell us that when Solomon conveyed the ark of the covenant, in which the book of the law was kept, into the temple, there was nothing in it but the two tables of stone which had been given by God to Moses. These tables, therefore, were the book of the law, and no other book of the law is mentioned as having existed at that time. They tell us, secondly, that in the time of Josiah the Book of the law was found by the priests whilst they were cleansing and purifying the Temple. If any other book were the subject of these observations, it would be contended that the authorship of it belonged to that period of time when it was described as having been found in the temple by the priests in the reign of Josiah, or even to a later, but certainly not to an earlier period.

But there are reasons, to be hereafter stated, why this inference is not admissble in the present instance. It may rather be conjectured that the two tables are what was found in the reign of Josiah, or perhaps some other records, which may have lain undiscovered in the Temple for many years ; but still not the Pentateuch, in the form which it now bears.

With these observations I shall conclude the examination of the witnesses who are supposed to furnish that universal consent for the belief that the Pentateuch is the original work of Moses.

## CHAPTER 11.

EXAMINATION OF THE INTERNAL EVIDENCE WHICH THE PENTATEUCH IS SAID TO FURNISH FOR THE BELIEF THAT IT WAS WRITTEN, IN ITS PRESENT FORM, BY MOSES.

Having, in the preceding chapter, examined the argument of Tradition or Universal Consent, which is adduced as a basis for the belief that the Pentateuch was written by Moses, let us now proceed to investigate the second argument which has been brought forward in the same cause, namely that of the *Internal Evidence* which the Pentateuch itself furnishes.

This part of our subject is liable to an antecedent difficulty, resulting from our imperfect knowledge of the language in which the books of the Old Testament are written, and the comparatively few persons who possess even a superficial acquaintance with it. It is necessary to take many interpretations of individual passages upon trust, aided only by such occasional verification as may result from comparing the testimony which men of different opinions will supply.

An illustration of my meaning on this point is furnished by a passage which I shall transcribe from Bishop Tomline's *Elements of Christian Theology*, vol. i, p. 74.

It is sometimes asserted that there is a sameness of language and style in the different books of the Old Testament, which is not compatible with the different ages usually assigned to them, and thence an inference is drawn unfavourable to the authenticity of these books, and particularly to that of the Pentateuch.

To this objection we may answer that it is founded upon an untrue

assertion ; those who are best acquainted with the original writings of the Old Testament agree, that there is a marked difference in the style and language of its several authors ; and one learned man in particular concludes from that difference, “ that it is certain the five books, which are ascribed to Moses, were not written in the time of David, the Psalms of David in the age of Josiah, nor the Prophecies of Isaiah in the time of Malachi.”

Contradictory assertions, unsupported by evidence, or only supported by evidence which nine-tenths of mankind are unable to verify, never elicit truth, and must be discarded from an inquiry which has truth alone for its object. Setting aside, therefore, for the present, the style of the language in which the Pentateuch is written, let us enquire what historical or other evidence it furnishes by which we may determine to what age this venerable literary monument owes its origin.

It has been inferred from certain passages in the five books, commonly called the Pentateuch, that Moses was the writer of them. On this head we will hear the argument as it is stated by Bishop Tomline in his *Elements of Christian Theology*, vol. i, p. 34 :

Moses frequently [Ex. xvii, 14. xxiv, 4. Numb. xxxiii, 2.] speaks of himself as directed by God to write the commands which he received from him, and to record the events which occurred during his ministry ; and at the end of Deuteronomy he expressly says, “ And Moses wrote this law, and delivered it unto the priests, the sons of Levi, which bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord and unto all the elders of Israel [Deut. xxxi, 6.]” and afterwards, in the same chapter, he says still more fully ; “ And it came to pass, when Moses had made an end of writing the words of this law in a book, until they were finished, that Moses commanded the Levites, which bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord, saying, “ Take this book of the law, and put it in the side” of the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, that it may be there for a witness against thee.”

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\* The expression “ in the side of the ark,” seems to mean no more than “ within or inside the ark.” A similar phrase occurs in Jonah, i, 5, “ But Jonah was gone down into the sides of the ship.”



Bishop Tomline, by a remarkable boldness of interpretation, makes the following comment [p. 5] on this passage:

It appears from Deuteronomy, [ch. xxxi, v. 26.] that the book of the Law, *that is the whole Pentateuch, written by the hand of Moses*, was, by his command, deposited in the tabernacle, not long before his death.

But surely these passages, † so far from proving that Moses was the author of the Pentateuch, are, on the

\* The principal passages (of not all) of the Pentateuch where mention is made of the book of the law, tables of stone &c, as written by Moses, are the following:

Exod. xvii, 13—14. And Joshua discomfited Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword. And the Lord said unto Moses, Write this for a memorial in a book, and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua: for I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven.

— xxiv, 4. And Moses wrote all the words of the Lord, and rose up early in the morning, and builded an altar under the hill, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel. And he sent young men of the children of Israel, which offered burnt offerings, and sacrificed peace-offerings of oxen unto the Lord. And Moses took half of the blood, and put it in basons, and half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar. And he took the book of the covenant and read in the audience of the people: and they said "All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient." And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the Lord hath made with you concerning all these words.

Then went up Moses, and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel: and they saw the God of Israel: and there was under his feet as it were a paved work of sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in his clearness. And upon the nobles of the children of Israel he laid not his hand: also they saw God, and did eat and drink. And the Lord said unto Moses, Come up to me into the mount, and be there: and I will give thee tables of stone, and a law, and commandments which I have written; that thou mayest teach them. And Moses rose up, and his minister Joshua: and Moses went up into the mount of God.

— xxv, 16. And thou shalt put into the ark the testimony which I shall give thee.

— xxxi, 18. And he [God] gave unto Moses, when he had made an end of communing with him upon Mount Sinai, two tables of testimony, tables of stone written with the finger of God.

— xxxii, 15. And Moses turned, and went down from the mount, and the two tables of the testimony were in his hand: the tables were written on both their sides; on the one side and on the other were they written. And the tables

contrary, the most convincing argument that Moses was not the writer.

Is it physically possible for a man to write, that when the book which he is writing was finished, he gave it to another man with orders to deposit it in any specified place? The act of writing the book must have preceded the completion of it, and its completion must have preceded the command: the record of this command, being posterior in time, must have come from another person: i. e. the

were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God graven upon the tables.

— xxxiv, 1. And the Lord said unto Moses “Hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first: and I will write upon these tables the words that were in the first tables, which thou brakest. &c.”

—xxxiv, 4. And he [Moses?] hewed two tables of stone like unto the first, and Moses rose up early in the morning, and went up unto Mount Sinai, as the Lord had commanded him, and took in his hand the two tables of stone.

—xxxiv, 27—29. And the Lord said unto Moses “Write thou these words: for after the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with thee and with Israel.” And he was there with the Lord forty days and forty nights: he did neither eat bread, nor drink water. And he wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the ten commandments. And it came to pass, when Moses came down from mount Sinai with the two tables of testimony in Moses’ hand, &c.

—xl, 20. 21. And he took and put the testimony into the ark, and set the staves on the ark, and put the mercy-seat above upon the ark: and he brought the ark into the tabernacle, and set up the veil of the covering, and covered the ark of the testimony; as the Lord commanded Moses.

Numbers xxxiii, 1. 2. These are the journeys of the children of Israel which went forth out of the land of Egypt with their armies under the hand of Moses and Aaron. And Moses wrote their goings out according to their journeys by the commandment of the Lord; and these are their journeys according to their goings out.

Deut. iv, 13. And he declared unto you his covenant, which he commanded you to perform, even ten commandments; and he wrote them upon two tables of stone.

—v. 22. These words the Lord spake unto all your assembly in the mount, out of the midst of the fire, of the cloud, and of the thick darkness, with a great voice: and he added no more. And he wrote them in two tables of stone and delivered them unto me.

—ix, 10 &c. And the Lord delivered unto me two tables of stone written with the finger of God; and on them was written according to all the words, which the Lord spake with you in the mount, out of the midst of the fire, in the day of the assembly. And it came to pass at the end of forty days and forty nights, that the Lord gave me the two tables of stone, even the tables of the covenant.

Pentateuch which records that Moses wrote the book of the law, and then gave it to the priests with a command where it should be kept, must be the work, not of Moses, but of some other writer.

The loose mode of interpretation generally applied to such passages as that which we have just quoted, results from the readiness with which most men acquiesce

—x. 1. At that time the Lord said unto me, “Hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first, and come up unto me into the mount, and make thee an ark of wood. And I will write on the tables the words that were in the first tables which thou brakest, and thou shalt put them in the ark.” And I made an ark of shittim wood, and hewed two tables of stone like unto the first, and went up into the mount, having the two tables in mine hand. And he wrote on the tables, according to the first writing, the ten commandments, which the Lord spake unto you in the mount out of the midst of the fire in the days of the assembly: and the Lord gave them unto me, And I turned myself, and came down from the mount, and put the tables in the ark which I had made; and there they be, as the Lord commanded me.

—xxvii, 8. And thou shalt write upon the stones all the words of this law very plainly.

— xxviii, 58. If thou wilt not observe to do all the words of this law that are written in this book, that thou mayest fear this glorious and fearful name THE LORD THY GOD, &c.

— xxxi, 9—13. And Moses wrote this law, and delivered it unto the priests the sons of Levi, which bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and unto all the elders of Israel. And Moses commanded them, saying, “At the end of every seven years, in the solemnity of the year of release, in the feast of tabernacles, when all Israel is come to appear before the Lord thy God in the place which he shall choose, thou shalt read this law before all Israel in their hearing. Gather the people together, men and women and children, and thy stranger that is within thy gates, that they may hear, and that they may learn, and fear the Lord your God, and observe to do all the words of this law: &c.

— xxxi, 19. [MOSES SPEAKS] Now therefore write ye this song for you and teach it the children of Israel: put it in their mouths, that this song may be a witness for me against the children of Israel. &c.

— xxxi, 22—26. Moses therefore wrote this song the same day, and taught it the children of Israel. And he gave Joshua the son of Nun a charge, and said, Be strong and of a good courage: for thou shalt bring the children of Israel into the land which I swore unto them: and I will be with thee.

And it came to pass, when Moses had made an end of writing the words of this law in a book until they were finished, that Moses commanded the Levites, which bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord, saying “Take this book of the law, and put it in the side of the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, that it may be there for a witness against thee.”



in what is proposed to them,\* rather than take the trouble of examining for themselves. For this reason also the title "Books of Moses" which means no more than the "History of Moses" or the "Mosaic History," is generally considered to mean the "book written by Moses," notwithstanding that the whole tenor of the history shews that Moses could not have been its author.

I have suggested in a previous page of this work, that Moses wrote no other book of the law than the two tables of stone: it is not, however, incumbent on me to prove the truth of this negative assertion, but from those who assert that Moses wrote a book of the law, and that the Pentateuch now existing is that book, the most convincing proof may with justice be demanded.

Up to the point at which we are now arrived I have shewn, not only the weakness of the two commonly received arguments for identifying the Pentateuch with the book of the law, namely Universal Consent and Internal Evidence, but that these very arguments tend rather to destroy the identity of the two. For in tracing back the chain of consent, we find that during the 900 years of Jewish History which precede the Babylonish captivity, we have no mention made of the book of the law at all. As regards the Internal Evidence, it is equally clear that the very expressions, on which most stress has been laid, could not have been written, if written by Moses, until after the book in which they occur was completed, which is an absurdity, involving a manifest contradiction of terms.

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\* Οὕτως ἀταλαίπωρος τοῖς πολλοῖς ἡ ζήτησις τῆς ἀληθείας, καὶ ἐπὶ τὰ ἔτοιμα μᾶλλον τρέπονται.

So little trouble does the enquiry after truth give to the world at large; and so ready are they to acquiesce in what is offered to them. THUCYDIDES. Book i, ch. 20.



## CHAPTER 12.

## THE CASE OF THE SAMARITAN PENTATEUCH EXAMINED.

As an argument for the belief that Moses was the author of the five books has been drawn from the existence of the Samaritan Pentateuch, it is necessary to take some notice of the book which passes under this name : though there is one significant fact connected with it which would seem to disqualify it from being adduced as an evidence upon the subject at all. It is only 200 years that the Samaritan Pentateuch has been known in Europe. Moreover there is not the slightest information to be found about it in any ancient author, at least as regards the character in which it is written, and that is all that at present concerns us, for the language is the same as the Hebrew. All that we know about it may be told in few words. There had always been an opinion prevalent among the learned that the Samaritans, who were bitter enemies to the Jews, might possess a copy of the Bible, differing possibly in some particulars from the received Hebrew text. This notion may perhaps be traced to Origen, who collated such copies of the Pentateuch as he found among the Samaritans for his great work on the Old Testament. Many hundred years, however, elapsed, and nothing was discovered to support the current opinion. At last in very modern times, a copy of the Pentateuch, written in letters differing from the Hebrew letters but in the same language, was brought into Europe. This copy was unfortunately very imperfect, but Archbishop Usher afterwards procured six other copies of the same book. The fact of its being in substance and in language the same as the Hebrew bible seemed to confirm the authority of the latter volume, but

of the fact that it is written in a different sort of letter an ingenious solution has been propounded. It was suggested that this particular copy of the Pentateuch had been preserved, in the old Hebrew character, by the obscure people who remained in Samaria, when the others and more distinguished of their countrymen were carried captive to Babylon. It is said that the Jews, during the captivity, lost the knowledge of the old Hebrew language, and their teachers, who read the Hebrew Scriptures to them in their synagogues, were obliged to interpret the meaning by using a Chaldee paraphrase. To bear out this explanation it is necessary to suppose, also, that the Jews transferred their scriptures from the old Hebrew character, which, according to this theory, was the same as the Samaritan, into the present Hebrew character, which is generally understood to be the Chaldee, as used at Babylon, where it was adopted by the Jews. In confirmation of this theory it is observed that the character found in the Samaritan Pentateuch is very similar to the inscriptions occurring on ancient Israelitish coins. Many learned divines have acquiesced in this solution of a fact, which is certainly curious, and seemed before to present a philological difficulty.

Before this explanation of the case concerning the Samaritan Pentateuch can be received, it is necessary to shew, 1. that the book is a genuine remnant of antiquity, 2. that the coins to which it bears a resemblance are also genuine.

The first of these requirements is rendered necessary on account of the very short time that the book has been known to scholars in Europe: and the second is equally important: because the resemblance between the letters of the Samaritan Pentateuch and those found on the coins is the only circumstance which gives the slightest support to the theory suggested, or which at all exempts it from being considered as a mere conjecture. It is well known

how skilful are the Orientals in imitating what appears to be eagerly sought after by Europeans; and perhaps no imposition is more easily practised than copying a book out of one character into another, the language still remaining unaltered. Coins, it is notorious, are often fabricated, and this fact would make it necessary to test the genuineness of all those which might be brought forwards to decide the question now under consideration.

As regards the question, who was the author of the Pentateuch, the Samaritan copy furnishes no argument either affirmative or negative, for the claims of Moses. If we admit the explanation, above given, to be true, the only inference which could be drawn from it is that the Pentateuch was in existence before the Babylonish captivity, i. e. about the year 600 before Christ, but it does not touch the long period of 900 years between Moses and the beginning of the Babylonish captivity. The Pentateuch might be as old as 600 years before Christ, and yet not as old as 1500 years before the same era.

But two grave objections lie against the arguments adduced to support the explanation above-mentioned of the existence of the Samaritan Pentateuch.

1. Why did the Jews transcribe their copies of the bible out of the old letters used by their fathers into the new letters used by the Chaldees their enemies? Was it because, during the captivity, they had lost the use of the Hebrew tongue? Yet they would not be more able to read the bible when written in Chaldee than in the old Hebrew letters. We do not find that Greek words become more intelligible to those who do not know the Greek language, by being written with the Roman alphabet, than when they are written in their own character. The Hebrew doctors, Ezra and the others, would be likely to understand the bible, even if written in the old character; and the common people would have no occasion to read it at all.

It is not found, in the history of other nations, that such



changes take place suddenly, or in consequence of any particular event. Changes of style in writing are made gradually, and are continually being made,—it is impossible that the hand-writings of a nation can either remain stationary or be completed suddenly: they flow on like the course of time, imperceptible in their minutiae, but wonderful in their results. If we could trace the progress of man through all the variations to which he is subject, we should find, in all cases, a continuity of thought, though judging from the appearance of distant points only in our history, we are apt to regard as heterogeneous, varieties of the same species acting under the same natural laws.

2. The argument drawn from coins may be summarily disposed of, and in refuting it I shall adduce the evidence of one who is well acquainted with the Hebrew language and literature, and author of a learned and valuable Hebrew Grammar, \* Mr Stuart, associate professor of sacred literature in the institution at Andover. His words are these :

The present *square* form of the Hebrew letters, is not the most ancient one ; as is evident from inscriptions on Hebrew *coins, stamped in the time of the Maccabees*, which have characters such as are designated in alphabet No III. [*alluding to his table of alphabets, in which No III gives the Samaritan letters*]. The present square letter is evidently derived from the Aramæan forms of letters, and probably originated some time *after* the birth of Christ. This, Kopp has recently shown, in a satisfactory manner, in his *Bilder und Schriften der Vorzeit*, II, pp. 95 seq., particularly pp. 156 seq.

This extract throws a clear light upon the subject before us. The present Hebrew letters are, it seems, later than the Christian era, whilst on the other hand the coins which have been adduced to prove the antiquity of the Samaritan Pentateuch, were struck long after the Babylonish captivity.

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\* Grammar of the Hebrew Language. &c. 4th edition, reprinted with the concurrence of the author, 8vo, Oxford. D. A. Talboys, 1831.



The same process of inference therefore goes to prove; first that the Samaritan letters are not necessarily as old as the period of the captivity, but only as the time of the Maccabees, and secondly, that the Jews did not change the form of their letters in consequence of their slavery in Babylon, but in a much later age, namely after the beginning of the Christian era.

The Samaritan Pentateuch, therefore, can furnish no aid towards our present enquiry, which is to ascertain who was the author of the book; or if it bears at all upon the question, it rather furnishes a testimony unfavourable to the claims of Moses. For if the book had been written by Moses in its present form, it is probable that the Israelitish people would never have consented to its being transferred into another character.

In conclusion, I will venture to propose an easy and natural solution for the case of the Samaritan Pentateuch. It is known that the hand writing of all countries gradually changes with time. No two generations write alike; and if we take the writings of the same country at two different periods removed to the distance of two or three centuries apart, the diversity will be so great that the two specimens may be supposed to belong to different countries and to different languages. The Samaritans are known to have borne a national enmity towards the Jews: there was no intercourse between the two nations. Together with their manners and habits, their handwritings, also, would naturally vary: it seems therefore in no way remarkable that their bibles, as they appeared in the seventeenth century after Christ, should be written in a different character from those of the Jews, who have also adopted different modes of writing, in consequence of their dispersion into foreign countries. The reader will find in the Appendix to this work a long extract about the Samaritan Pentateuch, in which I see good reason for believing that the Samaritans received their sacred books from the Jews themselves, in

the time of Manasseh, and long after the return of the latter from captivity.

## CHAPTER 13.

THAT MOSES IS NOT THE AUTHOR OF THE PENTATEUCH, PROVED—  
1. FROM INTERNAL EVIDENCE.

Thus then have we examined the grounds upon which it is generally believed that Moses is the author of those five books which form the beginning of the Hebrew Scriptures or Old Testament, as they are termed by Christians in contradistinction to their own books which they call the New Testament.

It remains to produce more positive testimony to the same end, and in doing so I shall class the various arguments under two heads also : 1. The Internal Evidence furnished by the books themselves that Moses is not their author, and 2. External Evidence, obtained from various sources leading to the same conclusion.

The Internal Evidence, (which will now have to be considered, shall be also classified under different sections, as tending to make the subject more clear, and to give grea-

ter force to the general principles of criticism on which the inferences, which I would draw, are grounded :

1. *The two tables of stone seem to have supplied the place of a book of the law.*

That the Hebrew legislator should deliver to his countrymen TWO TABLES OF STONE, on which the principal heads of their law were engraved, is consistent with all the information which History supplies concerning those early times and the practice of other nations. But, if we suppose a book of such length and bulk as the Pentateuch to have been given at the same time to the Israelites, what becomes of the two tables of stone ? where was the necessity that these also should be given ? It was not that they might be set up as monuments visible to the whole people, and as exponents of the heads of a law, which the written book would develop more fully, for the two tables of stone were never set up at all ; they were kept in the ark of the covenant, and there is no mention made of their ever being taken out ; not even when the Temple of Solomon was built, when they might with propriety have been set up in some public place, if this had been the use for which they were originally designed. But no such use is hinted at, by the writer, nor were they originally given by God for such a purpose ; as is manifest from their size, for when Moses came down from the mount, he held the two tables in his hand, which he could not have done, if they were of the usual size of monuments made to be set up in public.

But the supposition that the two tables of stone were intended to be set up as monuments, is refuted by the fact that other stones were actually set up by Joshua, according to a command given by Moses, and that on them was inscribed a copy of the law of Moses. The original injunction of Moses is found in the 27th chapter of Deuteronomy) vv. 1—8.

And Moses with the elders of Israel commanded the people saying, Keep all the commandments which I command you this day. And it

shall be on the day when ye shall pass over Jordan unto the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, that thou shalt set thee up great stones, and plaster them with plaster : and thou shalt write upon them all the words of this law, when thou art passed over, that thou mayest go in unto the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, a land that floweth with milk and honey ; as the Lord God of thy Fathers hath promised thee. Therefore it shall be, when ye be gone over Jordan, that ye shall set up these stones, which I command you this day, in mount Ebal, and thou shalt plaster them with plaster. And there shalt thou build an altar unto the Lord thy God, an altar of stones : thou shalt not lift up any iron tool upon them. Thou shalt build the altar of the Lord thy God of whole stones : and thou shalt offer burnt offerings thereon unto the Lord thy God : and thou shalt offer peace offerings, and shalt eat there, and rejoice before the Lord thy God. And thou shalt write upon the stones all the words of this law very plainly.

The fulfilment of the command is related in the 8th chapter of Joshua vv. 30—32 :

Then Joshua built an altar unto the Lord God of Israel in mount Ebal, as Moses the servant of the Lord commanded the children of Israel, as it is written in the book of the law of Moses, an altar of whole stones, over which no man hath lift up any iron : and they offered thereon burnt offerings unto the Lord, and sacrificed peace-offerings. And he wrote there upon the stones a copy of the law of Moses, which he wrote in the presence of the children of Israel. And all Israel, and their elders, and officers, and their judges, stood on this side the ark, and on that side before the priests the Levites, which bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord, as well the stranger, as he that was born among them ; half of them over against mount Gerizim, and half of them over against mount Ebal ; as Moses the servant of the Lord had commanded before, that they should bless the people of Israel. And afterward he read all the words of the law, the blessings and cursings, according to all that is written in the book of the law. There was not a word of all that Moses commanded, which Joshua read not before all the congregation of Israel, with the women, and the little ones, and the strangers that were conversant among them.

This narrative is remarkable, for it commemorates a public solemnity, held for no other purpose than that the laws of Moses might be impressed on the minds of the Jewish people. The writer also tells us that it was held in accor-



dance with the book of Moses, and yet he does not tell us that the book of Moses was produced on that occasion, though we are to suppose that it was in existence. Yet something is then done which seems to prove, by implication, that there was no such book at all at that time. Joshua is said to have engraved on certain stones a copy of the law of Moses, and afterward to have read all the words of the law, and the concluding paragraph relates that "there was not a word of all that Moses commanded, which Joshua read not before all the congregation of Israel." Must we, then, suppose that the whole of the Pentateuch was inscribed on those stones by Joshua? what could be the use of inscribing the historical parts of the Pentateuch on those stones, or reading them afterwards to the people, if the object was simply to admonish them that they should observe the law of Moses? It is more probable that an inscription much shorter than the whole of the Pentateuch, was carved upon these stones, and, as no mention is made of any book at all on the same occasion, we have a negative proof that no such book was in existence at that time.

The delivery of the two tables renders it unlikely that any other writing was bequeathed by Moses to the Israelitish people, particularly as the age in which Moses lived precedes by many centuries the times in which books, as far as we know of them, can be proved to have been written.

## 2. *Manner in which Moses is mentioned in the Pentateuch.*

If however, notwithstanding this antecedent improbability, it should yet be contended that Moses certainly wrote a book called the Book of the Law, it may be shewn that the Pentateuch, at all events, is not that book, as must be evident to every one who will dispassionately consider the manner in which the Pentateuch is written. This is a consideration which involves no question of grammatical idiom or style, which can be intelligible to the Hebrew student only—I reserve that for a separate chapter—but

is easy of comprehension to the most ordinary intellect. My meaning may be illustrated in this manner. If we read in a book the account of certain transactions in which a particular man is concerned, and his name always occurs in the third person, it is a natural inference that this man did not write the book, in which he is so described. This general principle is, no doubt, to be taken with some limitation; for it is well known that some persons have, from modesty or some other motive, introduced their own names in the third person, into their narrative of events in which they have acted a prominent part. Thus Thucydides the celebrated historian of the Peloponnesian War, prefaces his work with these words;

*Θουκυδίδης Ἀθηναῖος ξυνέγραψε τόν πόλεμον τῶν Πελοποννησίων καὶ Ἀθηναίων, ὡς ἐπολέμησαν πρὸς ἀλλήλους.*

Thucydides, of Athens, wrote the war between the Peloponnesians and Athenians, how they fought one against the other.

This mode of introducing his work, however, does not prevent the author from speaking, elsewhere, in the first person, as for instance in chapter 48 of the second book of his history, where he describes the plague at Athens:

*Ἐγὼ δὲ, οἷον τε ἐγίγνετο, λέξω, καὶ ἀφ' ᾧ τις σκοπῶν, εἴποτε καὶ αὐθις ἐπιπέσοι, μάλιστα ἂν ἔχοι τι προειδὼς μὴ ἀγνοεῖν, ταῦτα δηλώσω, αὐτὸς τε νοσήσας, καὶ αὐτὸς ἰδὼν ἄλλους πάσχοντας.*

I will relate its nature, together with such details as may best enable a man hereafter, if it should come again, to recognize it and to be prepared against it; for I both had the complaint myself, and saw others who had it also.

It is clear, from this passage, that Thucydides was the author of the book which bears his name; and the mode of speaking in the third person, with which the history commenced, is compensated by other direct expressions, and does not detract from his claims to be regarded as the author of the book. Indeed, the former sentence may be considered as equivalent to a modern title page "The History of the Peloponnesian war &c. by Thucydides."

It is also observable that writers, speaking of themselves in the third person, use a sort of reserve in all such self-descriptions. The admirable historian just mentioned, alludes to himself in two or three passages only of his immortal work, and with the utmost modesty and taste, though he held an important command as admiral in the war which he describes, and received the *honour* of *ostracism* from his democratic countrymen. But when we recur to the Hebrew Pentateuch, these two indications of authorship altogether fail us. Moses is invariably described in the third person, and, as three-fourths of the book concern him most intimately, it is impossible to conceive that the book could have been written by him without betraying some indication that he was the author.

This, then, is the second objection which Internal Evidence furnishes against Moses being the author of the Pentateuch, namely the manner in which as the author of that book he would be made to speak of himself. There is not a single passage in which can be found the most distant hint that Moses himself was its author. On the contrary the whole tenor of the book exhibits Moses as described by another person living in a later age, and some passages may be found which, if supposed to have been written by Moses, would attribute to him a vain-glorious character, which is highly inconsistent with his known virtues, but would be appropriate from the pen of a later writer, who wished to exalt and panegyryze the great law-giver to whom their nation owed its political existence. The following passages are instances of panegyric on Moses, which would much detract from our opinion of his modesty, if we could suppose them to have proceeded from his own pen :

EXOD. xi, 3. And the Lord gave the people favour in the sight of the Egyptians. Moreover the man Moses was very great in the land of Egypt, in the sight of Pharaoh's servants, and in the sight of the people.

NUMBERS xii, 3—8. Now the man Moses was very meek, above all



the men which were upon the face of the earth. And the Lord spake &c.....My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house. With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the Lord shall he behold: wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses.

DEUTER. xxxiii, 1. And this is the blessing, wherewith Moses the man of God blessed the children of Israel before his death. And he said "The Lord came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir unto them; he shined forth from mount Paran, and he came with ten thousands of saints: from his right hand went a fiery law for them. Yea he loved the people; all his saints are in thy hand: and they sat down at thy feet; every one shall receive of thy words. Moses commanded us a law, even the inheritance of the congregation of Jacob. And he was king in Jeshurun, when the heads of the people and the tribes of Israel were gathered together.

To these passages may be added one more, which seems to belong to the same class, and furnishes a singular mode of expression if we suppose it to come from Moses speaking of himself and his brother.

EXOD. vi, 26. 27. These are that Aaron and Moses, to whom the Lord said, "Bring out the children of Israel from the land of Egypt according to their armies." These are they which spake to Pharaoh king of Egypt, to bring out the children of Israel from Egypt: these are that Moses and Aaron.

### 3. *A book more ancient than the Pentateuch quoted by the writer of the Pentateuch.*

The writer of the Pentateuch quotes a more ancient work, which yet had for its subject the same events that are related in the Pentateuch. This appears from the following passage in the book of Numbers.

NUMBERS xxi, 11. And they journeyed from Obboth, and pitched at Ije-abarim, in the wilderness which is before Moab toward the sun-rising. From thence they removed, and pitched in the valley of Zared. From thence they removed, and pitched on the other side of Arnon, which is in the wilderness that cometh out of the coasts of the Amorites: for Arnon is the border of Moab, between Moab and the Amorites. Wherefore it is said in the book of the wars of the Lord, "What he did in the Red Sea, and in the brooks of Arnon."



V. *Anachronism concerning the enmity of the Egyptians towards shepherds.*

In Genesis, xlv, 34, it is said as a reason for the Israelites being placed in the land of Goshen, that "every shepherd is an abomination to the Egyptians." But it appears from every other part of the history of Joseph and Pharaoh, that there was no such enmity between them. This is also the opinion of Dr Shuckford; whose account of the matter is as follows :

There is indeed one passage in Genesis, which seems to intimate that there was that religious hatred, which the Egyptians were afterwards charged with, paid to creatures even in the days of Joseph; for we are informed that he put his brethren upon telling Pharaoh their profession, in order to have them placed in the land of Goshen, for, or because, "Every shepherd is an abomination to the Egyptians, Gen. xlv, 34." I must freely acknowledge, that I cannot satisfy myself about the meaning of this passage; I cannot see that shepherds were really at this time an abomination to the Egyptians; for Pharaoh himself had his shepherds, and when he ordered Joseph to place his brethren in the land of Goshen, he was so far from disapproving of their employment, that he ordered him, if he knew of any men of activity amongst them, that he should make them rulers over his cattle; nay the Egyptians were at this time shepherds themselves, as well as the Israelites, for we are told, when their money failed, they brought their cattle of all sorts unto Joseph, to exchange them for corn, and among the rest, their flocks of the same kind with those which the Israelites were to tell Pharaoh that it was their profession to take care of, as will appear to any one that will consult the Hebrew text in the places referred to. Either therefore we must take the expression that every shepherd was an abomination to the Egyptians, to mean no more than that they thought meanly of the employment, that it was a lazy, idle, and unactive profession, as Pharaoh seemed to question, whether there were any men of activity amongst them, when he heard what their trade was; or, if we take the words to signify a religious aversion to them, which does indeed seem to be the true meaning of the expression from the use made of it in other places of Scripture, then I do not see how it is reconcilable with Pharaoh's inclination to employ them himself, or with the Egyptians being many of them at this time of the same profession

themselves, which the heathen writers agree with Moses in supposing them to be. [Diod. Sic. lib. i.]

The learned have observed that there are several interpolations in the books of the Scriptures, which were not the words of the Sacred Writers. Some persons, affecting to shew their learning, when they read over the ancient MSS., would sometimes put a short remark in the margin, which they thought might give a reason for, or clear the meaning of some expression in the text against which they placed it, or to which they adjoined it; and from hence it happened now and then, that the transcribers from manuscripts so remarked upon, did, through mistake, take a marginal note or remark into the text, imagining it to be a part of it. Whether Moses might not end his period in this place with the words *that ye may dwell in the land of Goshen*; and whether what follows, *for every shepherd is an abomination to the Egyptians*, may not have been added to the text this way, is entirely submitted to the judgment of the learned. CONNECTION, Book V, vol. i, p. 341.

The learned writer of this extract is more correct in his statement of the difficulty than in its solution. It is a principle in criticism to consider a book as free from interpolation, until it is proved that interpolations have certainly been made. The charge of interpolation is brought against the books of the Old Testament, for no other reason than to reduce them into harmony with the preconceived opinion that they were written by the authors to whom they are commonly ascribed. In the present instance there has been no interpolation. The compiler, relating the honours paid to the family of Jacob in Egypt, and endeavouring to harmonize them with the state of things in his own times, 1000 years later, when the Egyptians, by their religious absurdities, had been made to entertain an enmity towards shepherds, has given us a description which, in this particular, is inconsistent with itself. In short the Egyptians held shepherds in aversion in the fifth, but not in the fifteenth, century before the Christian era.

V. *Anachronism that Moses should record his own death.*

There are certain passages in the Pentateuch, neither few in number nor ambiguous in meaning, which prove

that Moses was not the writer of that book, and that it could not have been written until several hundred years after his time; events are there mentioned which could not be recorded by Moses, because they did not happen during his life-time.

The most striking of these anachronisms occurs in the last chapter of Deuteronomy, where the death of Moses is related. The whole chapter must be transcribed, because it bears in it the most complete refutation of every expedient which has been had recourse to for solving the anomaly that an author should record his own death.

And Moses went up from the plains of Moab unto the mountain of Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, that is over against Jericho. And the Lord shewed him all the land of Gilead, unto Dan, and all Naphtali, and the land of Ephraim, and Manasseh, and all the land of Judah, unto the utmost sea, and the south, and the plain of the valley of Jericho, the city of palm trees, unto Zoar. And the Lord said unto him "This is the land which I sware unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, saying, I will give it unto thy seed: I have caused thee to see it with thine eyes, but thou shalt not go over thither.

So Moses the servant of the Lord died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the Lord. And He buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, over against Beth-peor: but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day. And Moses was an hundred and twenty years old when he died: his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated. And the children of Israel wept for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days: so the days of weeping and mourning for Moses were ended.

And Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom; for Moses had laid his hands upon him: and the children of Israel hearkened unto him, and did as the Lord commanded Moses. And there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face, in all the signs and the wonders, which the Lord sent him to do in the land of Egypt to Pharaoh, and to all his servants, and to all his land, and in all that mighty hand and in all the great terror which Moses shewed in the sight of all Israel.

As it is impossible for a writer to relate his own death, those who maintain that the Pentateuch is the work of Moses, make an exception in favour of the last chap-

ter. Dr Gray has the following remarks upon this subject :

The account of the death and burial of Moses, and some other seemingly porthumous particulars described in this chapter, have been produced to prove, that it could not have been written by Moses : and in all probability these circumstances may have been inserted by Joshua, to complete the history of this illustrious prophet ; or were afterwards added by Samuel, or some prophet who succeeded him. They were admitted by Ezra as authentick, and we have no reason to question the fidelity.

This language is authoritative and dictatorial. Truth when questioned, comes out purer and brighter for the ordeal through which it has passed : whereas error is scorched and withered by the touch of criticism. The chapter before us is admitted by all not to have been written by Moses. Why then was it ever attached to the book of Moses without some strong mark to denote that it was only an appendix ? It cannot be allowed that Joshua, Samuel or Ezra could connive at such a deception. There is internal evidence that neither Joshua nor Samuel made this addition to the Pentateuch ; for the word Nabi, rendered in English prophet, indicates an age later than that of Samuel. We learn from the First book of Samuel, chap. ix, verse 9, which was written after Samuel's death, that he who

is now called a Prophet, was beforetime called a Seer.

If, therefore, the xxxivth chapter of Deuteronomy had been written before or in the time of Samuel, Moses would have been designated as a Seer, [in Hebrew Roech] and not Nabi a Prophet. This exculpates both Joshua and Samuel from having added to the book of Moses without mark of such addition. There are also other indications in the same chapter that Joshua could not have written it, for he would hardly have written of himself that Joshua the son of Nun " was full of the spirit of wisdom : " neither would he have said " there arose not a prophet *since* in



Israel like unto Moses," for there was no other prophet to whom Moses could be compared except Joshua himself. The word *since* implies that many years had passed since the death of Moses, and that many prophets had arisen, none of whom could be placed in comparison with him who led them out of Egypt. Moreover, the words "no man knoweth of his sepulchre," i. e. the sepulchre of Moses, "unto this day" are another proof that the chapter was not added by Joshua, for they imply that a considerable space of time had elapsed, during which the sepulchre of Moses remained unknown. As Joshua died only 25 years after Moses, these words coming from his mouth would lose half their force, and would probably, also, convey an untruth, for we cannot believe that the great Hebrew legislator was buried clandestinely, or that Joshua, the next in command, and almost his equal, could be ignorant where his body was laid.

6. *Anachronism in names, especially those of places, mentioned in the Pentateuch.*

Many names of places occur in the Pentateuch, which were not given to those places until long after the time of Moses. This proves either that the book was written after those places had received the names by which they were then known; or that some later writer has inserted into the original work of Moses the names by which those places were known in his own age. The latter supposition is wholly untenable: it would be an outrage upon the integrity of a book like the Bible, which derives its importance from its being an immaculate record. The number of such passages is so great, (several hundred altogether) that a large part of the whole must be cut off as not genuine, if such texts are interpolations. It would, moreover, be a positive infringement of that very law which Moses delivered to the Israelites; for we find in Deuteronomy iv, 2, it is expressly forbidden to make any change what-

ever in the covenant which God gave through Moses.

DEUT. iv, 2. Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish aught from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the Lord your God, which I command you.

If it should be replied that the mere insertion of the name of a place into the historical part of the Pentateuch is not an infringement of the law of Moses, such a reply is tantamount to an admission of the whole question. I admit that the perfect law of Moses is contained in the Pentateuch, but not that the terms "Pentateuch" and "law of Moses" are convertible terms. The law of Moses was given 1500 years before Christ, but the Pentateuch was compiled probably not more than 400 or 500 years before Christ.

The passages where more modern names of places occur in the Pentateuch are these :

1. Hebron.

GEN. xiii, 18. Then Abram removed his tent, and came and dwelt in the plain of Mamre, which is in Hebron, and built there an altar unto the Lord.

Instead of the words "in the plain of Mamre" Bishop Patrick and Kidder interpret it "by the oak of Mamre," which is to be preferred, if we retain the reading 'in Hebron': but if, with Calmet, we read 'by or near Hebron,' the interpretation 'plain of Mamre' may be retained: for it is evident that, though an oak may be in a city, a plain can only be in its neighbourhood.

GEN. xxiii, 2. And Sarah died in Kirjath-arba; the same is Hebron in the land of Canaan: and Abraham came to mourn for Sarah, and to weep for her.

— xxiii, 19. And after this, Abraham buried Sarah his wife in the cave of the field of Machpelah before Mamre; the same is Hebron in the land of Canaan.

— xxxv, 27, And Jacob came unto Isaac his father unto Mamre, unto the city of Arbah, which is Hebron, where Abraham and Isaac sojourned.

— xlix, 30. In the cave that is in the field of Machpelah, which is before Mamre, in the land of Canaan &c.

It appears from these passages that the city of Hebron, which was also called Mamre, formerly bore the name of Kirjath-arba, i. e. the city of Arba. A question, therefore, arises, as to the time when the name Kirjath-arba was exchanged for that of Hebron. We in vain search the Pentateuch for an answer to this question, but in the book of Joshua the difficulty is entirely cleared up.

JOSHUA xiv, 6. 15 — Caleb, the son of Jephunneh the Kenezite said unto him [Joshua] “ ..... give me this mountain, whereof the Lord spake in that day; for thou heardest in that day how the Anakims were there, and that the cities were great and fenced: if so be the Lord will be with me, then I shall be able to drive them out, as the Lord said. And Joshua blessed him, and gave unto Caleb the son of Jephunneh Hebron for an inheritance. Hebron therefore became the inheritance of Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenezite unto this day, because that he wholly followed the Lord God of Israel. And the name of Hebron before was Kirath-arba; which Arba was a great man among the Anakims. And the land had rest from war.

If the name of Hebron was not given to the city formerly called Kirjath-arba, until after it was taken from the Anakims by Caleb the son of Jephunnah, it follows that the Pentateuch, in which the name ‘Hebron’ occurs several times, could not have been written until after the time, when that town was taken by Caleb the son of Jephunneh.

2. Dan.

GEN. xiv, 14. And when Abram heard that his brother was taken captive, he armed his trained servants, born in his own house, three hundred and eighteen, and pursued them unto Dan.

In the time of Abraham, and even in the time of Moses, there was no place called Dan: there was a city called Laish, which afterwards was captured by a marauding expedition of the Israelites and received the name of Dan. Bishop Patrick, in the Family Bible, gives the following note upon this passage:

— *pursued them unto Dan.*] As far as the place where one of the

springs of Jordan breaks forth called Dan, as Josephus relates, where he speaks of this history.

The words of Josephus here follow :

*Κατὰ πέμπτην ἐπιπεσὼν νύκτα τοῖς Ἀσσυρίοις περὶ Δάνον—οὕτως γὰρ ἡ ἑτέρα τοῦ Ἰορδάνου προσαγορεύεται πηγὴ—&c.*

Falling upon the Assyrians the fifth night near Dan—for so is one of the fountains of the Jordan called — &c.

We cannot doubt that in the time of Josephus the name Dan was well known to the Jews, whether applied to the tribe of Dan in the south of Palestine, to the little town formerly called Laish but afterwards Dan, or to the fountain of the Jordan, which seems to have been called Dan, because it was in the immediate neighbourhood of the town. This does not interfere with the question, whether the word Dan, as applied to these places, could have been in existence in the time of Moses. If it was not then known, as we have the best evidence to prove, we must infer that the Pentateuch was written or compiled after the name of Dan was given to the town of Laish: i. e. some time during the government of the Judges.

### 3. Succoth.

GEN. xxxiii, 17. And Jacob journeyed to Succoth, and built him an house, and made booths for his cattle : therefore the name of the place is called Succoth.

Dr Wells, as quoted by the editors of the Family Bible, remarks on the name Succoth :

So the place was afterwards called : it is situated not far from Jordan to the East.

This is, of course, the natural and obvious meaning of the text. It is not stated that Jacob gave the name of Succoth to this place, and as he soon after went down into Egypt, and none of his posterity ever came again into Canaan, until the time of Moses, it is almost certain that the place did not receive the name of Succoth until the Israelites were settled in the land, and gratified their natural



vanity by finding out the places where their great ancestors, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, had formerly resided, and naming the places in memory of the remarkable events which had happened at each of them.

## 4. Eshcol.

NUMBERS xiii, 23. And they came unto the brook of Eshcol, and cut down from thence a branch with one cluster of grapes, and they bare it between two upon a staff; and they brought of the pomegranates and of the figs. The place was called the brook Eshcol, because of the cluster of grapes which the children of Israel cut down from thence.

Bishop Patrick's note on this verse is highly sensible and becoming :

*The place was called the brook Eshcol.*] That is, when the Israelites got possession of the land, they called this brook, or valley, "Eshcol," in memory of this bunch of grapes, for so Eshcol signifies.

But the book, which relates that the place was called Eshcol, cannot have been written until the act of naming had taken place.

## 5. Bethlehem.

GEN. xxxv, 19. And Rachel died and was buried in the way to Ephrath, which is Bethlehem.

This form of speech implies that the place once called Ephrath was better known in the time of the writer by the name of Bethlehem. This is natural and consistent if we consider it as coming from a later writer, but it is difficult to conceive *Moses* writing in such a manner. Neither he nor the people, for whom he wrote, had ever been in the promised land, and could not have understood such a description.

The names again occur in the 48th chapter of Genesis, v. 7.

"And as for me,"—Jacob is speaking—"when I came from Padan, Rachel died by me in the land of Canaan in the way, when yet there was but a little way to come unto Ephrath : and I buried her there in the way of Ephrath ;" the same is Bethlehem.

The concluding words *the same is Bethlehem*, if not meant to explain the obsolete name, Ephrath, by one that was more intelligible, can have no meaning at all. It will be observed that many of these second names given to places in Palestine, are compounds of the word 'Beth.' They were mostly given to these places, after the Israelites expelled the original inhabitants, and took possession of the country for themselves. An exception may be taken in the case of a few places whose names are said to have been changed by Abraham, Isaac or Jacob : of which there are several examples.

## 6. BETHEL.

In Genesis xii, 8, we read the following passage concerning Abram ;

And he removed from thence unto a mountain on the east of Bethel, and pitched his tent, having Bethel on the west, and Hai on the east : and there he builded an altar unto the Lord, and called upon the name of the Lord.

It is an obvious comment to make on this verse that there was no such place as Bethel in the days of Abraham : for in Genesis xxviii, 18, 19, we find that Jacob gave the name of Bethel, which means "the house of God," to the place before called Luz. The words are these :

And Jacob rose up early in the morning, and took the stone he had put for his pillow, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it. And he called the name of that place Bethel : but the name of that city was called Luz at the first.

## 7. BEERSHEBA.

In Genesis xxi, 31, we read the origin of the name Beersheba ; namely the oath or covenant made between Abraham and Abimelech :

Wherefore he called that place Beer-sheba ; because there they sware both of them.

The place had been already mentioned in the 14th verse of the same chapter :

She [Hagar] departed, and wandered in the wilderness of Beersheba.

But in Genesis xxvi, vv. 26—31, we find the same story of the oath told of Isaac and Abimelech : with a variation concerning the name Beer-sheba :

vv. 32. 33. And it came to pass the same day that Isaac's servants came, and told him concerning the well which they had digged, and said unto him " We have found water." And he called it Sheba : therefore the name of the city is called Beer-sheba unto this day.

The comment, given on this text in the Family Bible, is from Dr Wells :

Isaac renewed the well dug by his father at this place, where in later times a city was built.

This account of the matter is probable, so far as concerns Abraham, Isaac, and Abimelech, but the words of the text are, ' Therefore the name of the city &c.' It is sufficient to remark that no city of Beersheba existed in the time of Moses : consequently the book in which it is mentioned could not have been written by Moses or any of his contemporaries.

#### 8. HORMAH.

NUMBERS xiv, 44. But they presumed to go up unto the hill-top : nevertheless the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and Moses, departed not out of the camp. Then the Amalekites came down, and the Canaanites which dwelt in that hill, and smote them, and discomfited them even unto Hormah.

——— xxi, 1—3. And when king Arad the Canaanite, which dwelt in the south, heard tell that Israel came by the way of the spies ; then he fought against Israel and took some of them prisoners. And Israel vowed a vow unto the Lord and said, If thou wilt indeed deliver this people into my hand, then I will utterly destroy their cities : and the Lord hearkened to the voice of Israel, and delivered up the Canaanites, and they utterly destroyed them and their cities, and he called the name of the place Hormah.

" This," [says Dr Shuckford, as quoted in the Family Bible,]



was effected in the days of Joshua, Jos. xii 14,\* or a little after his death. Judges i, 17.†

Yet Dr Shuckford did not perceive that the relation of an event, which happened in the days of Joshua, could not be made by the pen of Moses. The second of the passages above quoted, namely the first three verses of Numbers xxi, describes the fulfilment of Israel's vow, not in a mere word or short sentence, such as others which the commentators explain by saying that they are interpolations. The present text is too full for us to suppose so : it is evidently an integral portion of the main narrative, and cannot be separated from it. The whole of this part of the history, therefore, is liable to the same observation which has been so often made, that it was written by some one who lived long after the time of Moses.

#### 9. GILEAD.

When Jacob fled from Laban, he is said, in Gen. xxxi, 21, to have "set his face toward the mount Gilead : " But in verses 46, 47, 48, of the same chapter we read :

And Jacob said unto his brethren, " Gather stones " : and they took stones, and made an heap : and they did eat there upon the heap. And Laban called it Jegarsahdutha : but Jacob called it Galeed. And Laban said, " this heap is a witness between me and thee this day." Therefore was the name of it called Galeed.

The Hebrew word in these verses is the same, formed of the four consonants GLYD, but the vowel points are different, for which reason our English translation renders the word Gilead in the one case and Galeed in the other. But, whatever was the name of the place whether it was

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\* Jos. xii, 7—14. And these are the kings of the country which Joshua and the children of Israel smote &c. .... v. 14. The king of Hormah, one ; &c.

† JUD. i, 17. And Judah went with Simeon his brother, and they slew the Canaanites that inhabited Zephath, and utterly destroyed it. And the name of the city was called Hormah.



called so by Jacob or by Abraham, the word might properly be used by Moses, who lived later than both of them. This instance then furnishes a contrast to the other passages, already cited, of which Moses could not have been the writer.

NUMBERS xxxii, 34—42. And the children of Gad built Dibon and Ataroth, and Aroer, and Atroih, Shophan and Jaazer, and Jogbehah, and Beth-nimrah, and Bethharan, fenced cities : and folds for sheep.

And the children of Reuben built Heshbon, and Elealeh, and Kirjathaim, and Nebo, and Baal-meon, (their names being changed), and Shibmah : and gave other names unto the cities which they builded.

And the children of Machir the son of Manasseh went to Gilead, and took it, and dispossessed the Amorite which was in it. And Moses gave Gilead unto Machir\* the son of Manasseh ; and he dwelt therein.

And Jair the son of Manasseh went and took the small towns thereof, and called them Havoth-Jair.

And Nobah went and took Kenath, and the villages thereof and called it Nobah, after his own name.

The foundation of all these towns, with the other events there related, could not be effected in the two years which passed between the first invasion of Bashan by those tribes, and the death of Moses. The account of these things, therefore, must be considered as proceeding not from him, but some later writer, who describes not only the settling of those tribes which had obtained their allotments beyond Jordan, in the life-time of Moses, but also the erection of towns and cities, which occupied them many years.

#### *VI. Allusion to events that are known to have happened after the death of Moses.*

Under this head will be placed certain passages which bear a sort of negative or indirect testimony to the argument which we are pursuing. Such are the following :

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\* In Deuteronomy iii, 15. we read this in the first person, coming directly from Moses :—" And I gave Gilead unto Machir."

## I. THE EXPULSION OF THE CANAANITES.

And Abram passed through the land unto the place of Sichem. unto the plain of Moreh. And the Canaanite was then in the land. Gen. iix, 6.

The observation, which concludes this passage, is unmeaning, if the Canaanites were still in the land when the book of Genesis was written. As the Canaanites were one of the nations against whom Joshua fought after Moses was dead, it is evident that Moses could not have written these words, but that they must be referred to an author who lived when the Canaanites had been exterminated. In the 13th chapter of Genesis, verse 7, is a passage of similar import :

And there was a strife between the herdmen of Abram's cattle and the herdmen of Lot's cattle : and the Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelled then in the land.

The inferential force of those passages, proving that they were written after the expulsion of those tribes from the Holy Land, has not escaped the notice of those who maintain the Pentateuch to be the work of Moses. The explanation, which Dr Graves gives of them, cannot be listened to for an instant.

It does not follow that the Canaanites have been expelled when this clause was written : it may mean no more than that the Canaanites were *even at that time* in the land, which God had promised to give the seed of Abram. This observation, in the former place, may have been intended to illustrate the faith of Abram, who did not hesitate to obey the command of God, by sojourning in this strange land, though even then inhabited by a powerful nation, totally unconnected with, if not averse to, him ; a circumstance intimated by Abram's remonstrance to Lot, to avoid an enmity between them, "because they were brethren : " as if he had said, It would be extreme imprudence in us, who are brethren, who have no connexion or friendship but with each other, to allow any dissension to arise between us, surrounded as we are by strangers, indifferent or even averse to us, who might rejoice at our quarrel, and take advantage of it to our common mischief : " for the Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelled " even *then* in the land." Another reason

may be given why Moses noticed the circumstance of the Canaanite and the Perizzite having been then in the land, which he, immediately after the first notice of it, declares that God promised to the seed of Abram. The Israelites might thus be most clearly satisfied, that no change had taken place in the purpose of God to give them this land; when they were reminded, that at the very time this purpose was declared, the very same nation possessed the country, who now occupied it.

This is puerile, and has nothing to do with the question: the introduction of the little word *even* into the text, without any authority, derived from the original Hebrew, is unwarrantable. The expressions “And the Canaanite was then in the land,” “And the Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelled then in the land,” seem to have been introduced by the writer for no other purpose than to shew that the land was at that time occupied by strangers, that Abraham and Lot were not its masters, and therefore were obliged to conduct themselves with more restraint than their descendants who drove out these people and had the land all to themselves. If the translators of our Bible understood the passages in the same sense as Dr Graves, why did they not adopt a less ambiguous mode of rendering it unto English, by inserting the word *even*, or by placing the word *then* in such a manner that it might have the force of *even then*? To give it this meaning, they ought to have placed it the last word in the sentence; thus—“The Canaanite was in the land *then*.” But they have not given it this signification, neither have the translators of the Septuagint and the Vulgate understood the word *then* in that sense. The former translates the passages thus:

Οἱ δὲ Χανααῖοι τότε κατοικοῦν τὴν γῆν. Gen. xii, 6.

But the Canaanites then inhabited the land.

Οἱ δὲ Χανααῖοι καὶ οἱ Περεζαῖοι τότε κατοικοῦν τὴν γῆν. Gen. xiii, 7.

But the Canaanites and the Perizzites then inhabited the land.

The Latin Vulgate, also, conveys the same signification:

Chananaeus autem tunc erat in terra, Gen. xii. 6.

But the Canaanite was then in the land.



Et autem tempore Chananæus et Pherezæus habitabant in terra illa. Gen. xiii, 7.

But at that time the Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelt in that land.

2. ALLUSION TO THE KINGS OF ISRAEL.

The next passage which I shall adduce is still more decisive of the age in which the Pentateuch was written.

GEN. xxxvi, 30. 31. Duke Dishon, duke Ezer, duke Dishan; there are the dukes that came of Hori, among their dukes in the land of Seir. And these are the kings that reigned in the land of Edom, before there reigned any king over the children of Israel.

These words prove as plainly as words can express, that since that time there *had* been kings who reigned over Israel. Now the first king of Israel was Saul, who reigned 500 years after the death of Moses. Yet those who maintain that the Pentateuch is the work of Moses, have endeavoured to explain the passage by supposing that Moses himself was a sort of king over Israel. Thus in the Family Bible is given the following note upon the text now under consideration :

*Before there reigned any king over the children of Israel.*] Moses, having recently mentioned the promise of God to Jacob, that "kings should come out of his loins," observes it as remarkable, that Esau's posterity should have so many kings, and yet there was no king in Israel when he wrote this book. Moses might have written this by inspiration or he might well write it without a spirit of prophesy; and we might affirm, if necessary, that his meaning is, "All these were kings in Edom, *before his own time*;" who was, in a certain sense, the first king in Israel, DEUT. xxxiii, 5; for he truly exercised royal authority over them, as Selden observes. *Bp Patrick*. See the note on Deut. xxxiii, 5.

To save the reader the trouble of referring to this note, it is here subjoined.

—*he was king in Jeshurun,*] Many persons are called kings in Scripture, whom we should rather denominate *chiefs* or *leaders*. Such is the sense of the word in this passage. Moses was the *chief*, the *leader*, the *guide* of his people, fulfilling the duties of a "king," but he was not *king* in the same sense as David or Solomon, was afterwards. This remark reconciles Gen. xxxvi, 31, "These kings reigned in Edom, before



there reigned any king over the children of Israel," for Moses, though he was *king* in an inferior sense, yet did not *reign*, in the stronger sense, over the children of Israel, their constitution not being monarchical under him. *Calme's Dictionary*. Moses was king; that is, under God the supreme ruler and governor of Israel. *Bp Patrick, Dr Wells*. Moses was a prince or governor, he gave laws and ruled the people. *Bp Kidder*. Was appointed of God the leader and governor of the Israelites. *Pyle. Bp Hall*.

These notes, so far from reconciling the two texts, actually contradict one another. Moses "was king," yet it was "in an inferior sense," he "was not king in the same sense as David or Solomon." This quibbling style of interpretation is highly censurable in historical criticism, and never has been allowed, where there was not a preconceived notion, or a particular theory to support. The truth, however, of the texts, that have been quoted, lies upon the surface, and common sense will be found to be the best interpreter. The Pentateuch, which informs us that there had been up to that time no king in Israel, was not written until there actually *was* a king in Israel, and the words, *he was king in Jeshurun*, applied to Moses, have nothing to do with the matter: they form part of a chapter describing the blessing of Moses, and are in a highly poetical or declamatory style, shewing that 'king' must be interpreted not literally, but metaphorically, a *prince, leader* or *governor*, as it is rendered in that portion of the note which was written by Bishop Kidder, Pyle and Bishop Hall.

### 3. THE CEASING OF THE MANNA.

And the children of Israel did eat manna forty years, until they came to a land inhabited; they did eat manna, until they came unto the borders of the land of Canaan.

This passage might perhaps have passed unnoticed, even though Moses died at least one month before the 40 years were expired, as we read in Deuteronomy xxxiv, 8 :

And the children of Israel wept for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days &c.

The expression, 40 years, might be understood in round numbers, were it not for the fact that the manna had not ceased when Moses died. This we learn from Joshua, v. 12; that

The manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the old corn of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year.

It appears, then, that an allusion is here made to an event, the ceasing of the manna, which is known not to have happened, until after the death of Moses. The relation of its ceasing could not, therefore, have been written by Moses.

4. The sinew that was not eaten.

The thigh of Jacob is said to have shrunk after his interview and wrestling with the angel. The account is found in the XXXIInd chapter of Genesis, verses 31. 32.

And as he passed over Penuel, the sun rose upon him, and he halted upon his thigh. Therefore the children of Israel eat not of the sinew which shrank, which is upon the hollows of the thigh, unto this day: because he touched the hollow of Jacob's thigh in the sinew that shrank.

This reference to a custom still existing among the Israelites seems decidedly to indicate a later date than that of Moses. No one has ventured to assert that the Mosaic law was observed by the Jews before it was instituted by Moses. Now the words of the passage before us seem to shew that the Israelites had, for a very long time, abstained from eating the sinew which shrank. Moses, being conscious that this custom was ordained by himself, could hardly have used such language, or have claimed such great antiquity as the words seem to indicate.

8. *The Pentateuch betrays a more advanced state of knowledge than prevailed in the time of Moses.*

Many expressions, used in the Pentateuch, indicate a more advanced state of knowledge than was likely to exist

among the Jews, when they were just escaped from Egyptian bondage. The writer introduces these expressions apparently for the purpose of leading his readers to comprehend his meaning by alluding to something well known among them.

This peculiarity is observable; 1. In the account of the four rivers which watered the garden of Eden:

The name of the first is Pison: that is it which compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold: and the gold of that land is good; there is bdellium and the onyx-stone. And the name of the second river is Gihon: the same is it that compasseth the whole land of Ethiopia. And the name of the third river is Hiddekel: that is it which goeth toward the east of Assyria. And the fourth river is Euphrates.

The first three of these rivers were little known to the Israelites, even in the most civilized periods of their commonwealth: they therefore required to be more fully described; but of the well known Euphrates no description was necessary. Yet in the time of Moses it may be doubted whether the Israelites were not in too ignorant and degraded a state, owing to their severe slavery in Egypt, to render the above distinction at all applicable.

2. In the description of the ark resting on Mount Ararat.

And the ark rested in the seventh month, on the seventh day of the month, upon the mountains of Ararat.

Now the mountains of Ararat are situated a long way to the north-east of the Holy Land, and the Israelites, having never crossed the Jordan, but dwelling in the Arabian wilderness during all the life of Moses, would not be likely to know even where Mount Ararat was to be found. But in later times, when the Jews were in correspondence with foreign nations, such a description would be intelligible and appropriate.

3. The case is somewhat the same with Damascus mentioned in GEN. xiv, 15.

And he divided himself against them, he and his servants, by night.

and pursued them unto Hobah, which is on the left hand of Damascus.

Hobah and Damascus were equally unknown to the Israelites, when they first came out of Egypt: the situation of Hobah could not, therefore, be more clearly explained by reference to that of Damascus. The whole of Palestine lay between the Israelites and Syria, of which Damascus was the capital.

4. A similar allusion, less applicable in the time of Moses, than in an after-age, is found in Genesis ix, 18.

And the sons of Noah that went forth of the ark, were Shem, and Ham, and Japheth: and Ham is the father of Canaan.

But the Israelites knew nothing of the Canaanites until after the death of Moses, when they were conducted by Joshua over the Jordan, and came in contact with the Canaanites, Hivites, and other nations, who at that time occupied the land of promise. If, however, we suppose the Pentateuch to have been written in a later age, when the Canaanites were too well known to the Israelites by repeated wars, the allusion to them acquires a propriety which hardly belongs to it at a time, when these people were comparatively unknown.

#### 5. Mention of the Ishmeelites.

GEN. xxxvii, 25—28. And they [i. e. Joseph's brethren] sat down to eat bread: and they lifted up their eyes and looked, and, behold, a company of *Ishmeelites* came from Gilead with their camels bearing spicery and balm and myrrh, going to carry it down into Egypt.

And Judah said unto his brethren, "What profit is it if we slay our brother, and conceal his blood? Come, and let us sell him to the *Ishmeelites*, and let not our hand be upon him; for he is our brother and our flesh." And his brethren were content.

Then there passed by *Midianites* merchantmen; and they drew and lifted up Joseph out of the pit, and sold Joseph to the Ishmaelites for twenty pieces of silver; and they brought Joseph into Egypt.

Here the merchants, to whom Joseph is sold, are twice called Ishmeelites, and once Midianites. Bishop Patrick explains the inconsistency in the following extraordinary manner:



*Ishmeelites*] They are called below Midianites. These people were near neighbours to each other; and were joined together in one company or caravan, as it is now called. It is the custom, even to this day, in the East, for merchants and others to travel through the deserts in large companies, for fear of robbers or wild beasts.

If the passage, to which these comments are annexed, occurred in one of the famous Greek or Latin historians, Livy, Thucydides, or any other, such a note would not for one instant be taken as sound criticism, because none of those able writers would be guilty of such an absurdity as applying two names, known to be distinct, to the same people, within the space of four lines. If some idle and weakly-written tale contained the inconsistency, the mode of interpreting it, which Bishop Patrick applies to the passage before us, might be passed over without notice, but, even then, more from its being of no importance, than from its soundness or its propriety. But, when we find this discrepancy in a work, which professes to be inspired, it is highly desirable that such an inconsistency or discrepancy should be cleared up. Why have none of the commentators remarked on the singular circumstance of there being Ishmaelitish merchants at all, in the time when Joseph was sold into Egypt? Ishmael was Jacob's uncle, being brother to Isaac, Jacob's father. The family of Ishmael could not have encreased to such an extent in the time of which the history treats. The mention of Ishmaelites, in the text before us, indicates that the writer lived many generations later, when Ishmaelitish merchants were well known. Still less likely is it that there were Midianitish merchants in those days; for Midian was also one of the sons of Abraham, and 54 years younger than Isaac: see GENESIS XXV, 2. At all events the variation in the name of this tribe of merchantmen renders it impossible that Moses could have written the narrative; unless we suppose that, when he had it in his power to describe the matter accu-

ately and definitely, he rather chose to relate it in such a manner as to puzzle all future ages as to its exact meaning.

6 Allusion to the Sidonians.

DEUT. iii. 9. Which Hermon the Sidonians call Sirion ; and the Amorites call it Shenir.

But the Sidonians lived a long way off from the deserts of Arabia, where Moses and the Israelites wandered, and were probably unknown to them. The passage was written by some one who not only knew the Sidonians and Amorites, but was aware that his readers knew them also, and he mentions them for the purpose of rendering his narrative more intelligible.

7 Minute account of Meribah.

NUMBERS xx, 13. This is the water of Meribah ; because the children of Israel strove with the Lord, and he was sanctified in them.

This mode of specifying the place was less necessary in the time of Moses : but would be requisite if the account is to be referred to a period of time, a thousand years later than Moses ; when the site of Meribah, however interesting, would otherwise have been unknown.

8 Beer.

The same observation is applicable to Beer mentioned in Numbers xxi, 16 :

And from thence they went to Beer : that is the well whereof the Lord spake unto Moses, " Gather the people together, and I will give them water."

Both of these texts were written to teach the Israelites the great things which God had done for their ancestors under Moses.

9 Jericho.

NUMBERS xxii, 1. And the children of Israel set forward, and pitched in the plains of Moab on this side Jordan by Jericho.

Jericho was but a small town ; and I should think

unknown to the Israelites, before they crossed the Jordan.

10. Bedstead of Og.

Deuteronomy iii, 11. For only Og king of Bashan remained of the remnant of giants; behold, his bedstead was a bedstead of iron; is it not in Rabbath of the children of Ammon? nine cubits was the length thereof, and five cubits the breadth of it, after the cubit of a man.

Dr Pyle (in the Family Bible) remarks on this passage :

It is probable, that either Og conveyed his iron bedstead, with other furniture of his palace, into the country of the Ammonites, to prevent their falling into the hands of the Israelites : or else the Ammonites had taken it from him in some former conquest, and kept it as a monument of their victory.

Either of these cases would be probable, if it could be first proved that Moses wrote this verse, and that he knew of Og's bed being kept in Rabbath. But as Rabbath was not taken by the Israelites until the time of David, as we read in II Sam. xii, 26,

And Joab fought against Rabbah of the children of Ammon, and took the royal city,

it is not likely that the Israelites knew anything about the bedstead of king Og until then. In the reign of David, five hundred years had passed since Og lived, and his bedstead had consequently become an object of curiosity, like the great bed of Ware, which is still shewn in that town, though only three hundred years old. It is hardly possible that Moses knew any thing about this bedstead of king Og, afterwards so famous.

9. *Variation in the name given to the priest of Midian father-in-law of Moses, and to Joshua.*

It is not probable that Moses should designate his own father-in-law by three different names. Yet we find he is called in one passage Reuel, in a second Jethro, and Raguel in a third. The first passage is in Exodus, chap. ii, vv. 16—21.

Exodus ii, 16—21. Now the priest of Midian had seven daughters and they came and drew water and filled the troughs to water their father's flock. And the shepherds came and drove them away: but Moses stood up and helped them, and watered their flock. And when they came to Reuel their father, he said "How is it that ye are come so soon to-day?" And they said "An Egyptian delivered us out of the hand of the shepherds, and also drew water enough for us, and watered the flock." And he said unto his daughters, "And where is he? why is it that ye have left the man? call him that he may eat bread. And Moses was content to dwell with the man: and he gave Moses Zipporah his daughter.

Here he is plainly called Reuel, but in the 18th chapter of the same book, v. 1, he is as evidently designated by the name Jethro.

Exod. xviii, 1. When Jethro, the priest of Midian, Moses' father-in-law, heard of all that God had done for Moses, and for Israel his people, and that the Lord had brought Israel out of Egypt; then Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, took Zipporah, Moses' wife, after he had sent her back &c.

In a third passage the same individual is called Raguel.

NUMBERS x, 29. And Moses said unto Hobab, the son of Raguel the Midianite, Moses's father-in-law, "We are journeying unto the place &c.

In the last of these quotations the name, Raguel, is not unlike the first, Reuel: but this very similarity encreases the improbability that Moses himself should have written them so. The history of the world does not furnish a parallel instance: no other book can be mentioned, in which the writer, describing a near relative of his own, has called him by three different appellations with no allusion to the identity of the individual, and giving no reason for his being so variously named. The interpretation, which I put on this and other remarkable passages, simplifies the whole matter: the three different accounts have been taken from three separate documents, and the Pentateuch, where they meet, is consequently a compilation, and not an original work.



A similar variation will be found between those passages of the Pentateuch where the name of Joshua occurs :

EXODUS xxiv, 13. And Moses rose up, and his minister Joshua : and Moses went up into the mount of God.

NUMBERS xiii, 16. These are the names of the men which Moses sent to spy out the land. And Moses called Oshea the son of Nun Jehoshua.

DEUTERONOMY xxxii, 44. And Moses came and spake all the words of this song in the ears of the people, he and Hoshea the son of Nun.

Thus four forms of the name occur in our Bibles, but in the Hebrew there are only three : and in the Septuagint and Vulgate translations, there are only two. Their correspondence may be thus shewn :

Eng.	Heb.	Sept.	Vulg.
Oshea (Numbers xiii, 16)	להושע	'Αὐση	Oshee
Hoshea (Dent. xxxii, 44)	והושע	'Ιησους	Josue
Joshua (Exod. xxiv, 13)	יהושע	'Ιησους	Josue
Jehoshua (Numb. xiii, 16)	יהושע	'Ιησους	Josue

#### 10. *Argument derived from the use of the expression “unto this day.”*

There is a remarkable mode of expression, occurring in several parts of the Pentateuch, which excludes the possibility of Moses, or indeed of any one having written it, until long after the time of the events related in the order of the history : I mean the words “until this day,” by which is of course meant the day or time when the author lived and wrote his history. As this expression occurs in some of the passages which have been already cited for other purposes, it is unnecessary to repeat them, but to refer to the places where they are given, and to cite at present the remaining passages of the Pentateuch, where the same expression is to be found. It must, however, be premised that in some of these the expression “unto this day,” is appropriate as referring to the time of Moses himself, but in others, where the principal event belongs to the age of Moses, and the result, effect, or other posterior event is

referred to a future age, we can only conclude that the writer, in whose life-time the posterior event happened, lived at a later period than the age of Moses.

## 1.

The first place, in which these words are found, is Genesis xix, 37.

And the first-born [i. e. of the daughters of Lot] bare a son, and called his name Moab : the same is the father of the Moabites unto this day.

Here, no inference can be drawn to ascertain the age of the writer. The whole period of time, during which Moab existed as a nation, is equally applicable to the words 'unto this day.' If, however, it could be shewn that the Moabites did not exist as a nation in the time of Moses, this passage would furnish the same proof which is drawn from others where the words occur, that Moses could not have been the writer. But, as the Moabites were probably a tribe, even in the time of the Exodus, the words before us may have been written even by Moses himself.

## 2.

Gen. xxii, 14. And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-jireh : as it is said to this day, In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen.

This verse also, as far as concerns the words 'unto this day' may have been written by Moses ; but it is not equally obvious in what sense Moses could be made to say that his readers might still see the place Jehovah-jireh. He had never seen it himself, and probably knew nothing about it. Jehovah-jireh was in Canaan : and the Israelites had hitherto had no communication with the people of that country.

## 3.

The third place, where we find the same words 'unto this day,' [Gen. xxxii, 32] has been already cited at page 109. This instance, however, has no similarity to the two preceding. The custom of refraining from eating the sinew which flank, is nowhere shewn in the Bible to have existed be-

fore the time of Moses: it was he who instituted the custom, wherefore it would be highly inappropriate for *him* to advert to the length of time that the custom had lasted. It could by no possibility have lasted longer than a few years. A law-giver who alludes to a custom, of which he was himself the originator, says "Wherefore we still observe the custom *at* the present day," not "*until* this day." The word *until* denotes a prior date and a posterior date, "*from* the former *until* the latter," and in general implies a long interval. Such an interval cannot be traced, if Moses wrote the words "until this day."

11. *Allusion to the want of a regular government.*

In the 12th chapter of Deuteronomy, we find a variety of admonitions about the manner in which the Israelites should conduct their various offerings and sacrifices, when they should come into the promised land. In verse 8 we read :

Ye shall not do after <sup>7</sup>all the things that we do here this day, every man whatsoever is right in his own eyes.

This is the very expression which occurs so often in the book of Judges, in reference to the time when there was no king in Israel. It is certainly curious that the same form of expression should occur in the text before us, and leads to the suspicion that it was written at the same time and by the same author who uses the same form of words elsewhere. The note in the Family Bible, to Deut. xii, 8, is from Bp Patrick :

*Every man whatsoever is right in his own eyes.*] This does not mean that there was no good order kept among them, or that they were at liberty to sacrifice where they pleased: but that in such an uncertain state, when they were removing from place to place, many took the liberty in those matters to do as they thought good.

This annotation, like too many similar ones found in our Commentators, is grounded on the supposition that the words "every man doing what was right in his own eyes" can have two different meanings. There may, no doubt

be different *degrees* of force attached to the words ; but, in *kind*, their meaning is invariable : they imply a great license unrestrained by a settled and regular form of government : and this state of license certainly did not prevail in the time of Moses, whose punishments of crime were, in all cases, prompt and severe. I therefore refer the form of speech to a later day, even to those lawless times which followed the Babylonish Captivity.

## CHAPTER 14.

BOOK OF JOSHUA EXAMINED—ANACHRONISMS AND OTHER INTERNAL EVIDENCE, SHEWING THAT IT WAS WRITTEN IN A LATER AGE.

The book of Joshua is generally understood to have been written by the great captain whose name it bears, and who succeeded Moses in the supreme command of the Israelitish people. In support of this opinion the same arguments are usually adduced which have been cited in the previous part of this work concerning the books of Moses, GENERAL CONSENT and INTERNAL EVIDENCE. I use the



expression *general* instead of universal consent, because, if the reader will turn back to page 38, where an account is given of the supposed author of this book, he will observe that "there is not a perfect agreement among the learned, respecting the author of this book." Even this modified form of expression loses much of its force, when we consider that no ancient author either sacred or profane, before the Christian era, mentions the name of Joshua or gives the least hint that there was any book written by him. It is therefore unnecessary to waste time in refuting this argument of general consent, which means nothing more than a vague opinion, entertained by some but rejected by others, and only beginning to shew itself fourteen hundred years after the death of Joshua.

But the second argument, of internal evidence, requires to be noticed, because it is put forward with more confidence, on the strength of two passages which occur in the book before us. The first of these is JOSHUA v, 1 :

And it came to pass, when all the kings of the Amorites, which were on the side of Jordan westward, and all the kings of the Canaanites which were by the sea, heard that the Lord had dried up the waters of Jordan from before the children of Israel, UNTIL WE WERE PASSED OVER, that their heart melted, neither was there spirit in them any more, because of the children of Israel.

Bishop Tomline remarks on this passage :

The use of the word "we" proves that this book was written by Joshua, or by some one else alive at the time.

This inference is obvious, and cannot be objected to, if it can be shewn that the words of the text, UNTIL WE WERE PASSED OVER, are a correct translation of the corresponding words in the original Hebrew Bible. This, however, is not the case : the passage before us is one of the parts of the Bible, which have been corrupted by time, and the error has arisen in the present instance from the great similarity between the Hebrew words עברנו ABERANOO we

passed over” and עברם ABEROOM “he caused them to pass over.” These words are very similar, and though the common text of the Hebrew bible now reads ABERANOO, which gives the sense of “we passed over,” yet this was not the old reading of the passage, but ABEROOM “he caused them to pass over,” and among the various readings of the text ABEROOM actually is found: but the Hebrew letter ם *m* has been carelessly divided into two letters ן and ן, *nu*, by the copyist, and the translators of the Bible, not perceiving the error, and perhaps tempted to make a choice which tended to give to the book the value of a contemporary record, have given the passage that interpretation which has misled so many critics, and on which is built so fallacious a theory.

That the error is such as I describe it, and consequently that the theory built upon it is fallacious, must inevitably result from the accuracy of our present statement, which becomes almost a matter of certainty from the concurrence of the Septuagint and Vulgate translations. In the former the whole verse is rendered thus:

*Καὶ ἐγένετο ὡς ἤκουσαν οἱ βασιλεῖς τῶν Ἀμορρῶν οἱ ἦσαν πέραν τοῦ Ἰορδάνου, καὶ οἱ βασιλεῖς τῆς Φοινίκης οἱ παρὰ τὴν θάλασσαν, ὅτι ἀπεξήρανε Κύριος ὁ Θεὸς τὸν Ἰορδάνην ποταμὸν ἐκ τῶν ἔμπροσθεν τῶν υἱῶν Ἰσραὴλ ἘΝ ΤΩΙ ΔΙΑΒΑΙΝΕΙΝ ἈΤΤΟΥΣ, καὶ ἐτάκησαν αὐτῶν αἱ διάνοιαι καὶ κατεπλάγησαν, καὶ οὐκ ἦν ἐν αὐτοῖς φρόνησις οὐδεμία ἀπὸ προσώπου τῶν υἱῶν Ἰσραὴλ.*

The translation of the passage in the Latin Vulgate is in harmony with the preceding:

Postquam ergo audierunt omnes reges Amorrhæorum, qui habitabant trans Jordanem ad Occidentalem plagam, et cuncti reges Chanaan, qui propinqua possidebant Magni Maris loca, quod siccasset Dominus fluenta Jordanis coram filiis Israel, DONEC TRANSIRENT, dissolutum est eorum, et non remansit in iis spiritus, timentium introitum filiorum Israel.

In the German translations of the bible the error has been corrected and the proper reading of the word restored.

It appears, then, that the first passage which has been

made the basis for the belief that the book of Joshua is a contemporary writing, has been incorrectly translated in our common English Bibles, and consequently the opinion built upon it must fall to the ground.

The second passage which has been selected as proving that the book of Joshua was written in or immediately after the time of Joshua is found in Chapter vi, v. 25.

Joshua saved Rahab the harlot alive, and her father's household and all that she had; *and she dwelleth in Israel unto this day*; because she hid the messengers, which Joshua sent to spy out Jericho.

It is argued that if she was dwelling in Israel even unto this day, i. e. in the time of the writer, the book must have been written in the life-time of Rahab.

It may be replied to this that even if Rahab was alive when the book of Joshua was written, the words even 'until this day' seem to imply that many years had elapsed, and that Rahab was consequently a very old woman. Joshua, also, must have been a long time dead; for he was more than eighty years old, when the city of Jericho was taken.

But it is an error to infer that Rahab was alive when the passage before us was written. It means that her descendants were then still living among the Israelites, and not she herself. This is one of the most common forms of speech found in all the Jewish writings: Moab, Ammon, Israel, denote, not the individuals who bore those names, but the whole of their posterity. It is hardly necessary to give instances of this form of speech: one only may suffice. In the book of Judges ch. i, v. 3, we read:

Judah said unto Simeon his brother "Come up with me into my lot, that we may fight against the Canaanites: and I likewise will go with thee into thy lot." So Simeon went with him.

As Judah and Simeon had been dead two, three or perhaps even four hundred years, it is evident that it was their descendants and not themselves, who made a covenant to assist one another in subjugating the Canaanites.

As I am not aware that any other passages have been quoted from the book of Joshua as furnishing Internal Evidence that it was written during or soon after the time of Joshua: we may at once proceed to enumerate the passages which furnish internal evidence that it certainly was *not* written until long after his time.

That the reader's attention may not be wearied by an affectation of method, which is no longer necessary here, because it has been adopted in Chap. 13 for the purpose of shewing what the subject is capable of, I shall briefly notice each passage by itself, following the order, not of a regular argument digested under separate heads, but of the chapter and verse where these passages occur.

CHAP. iv, 9. And Joshua set up twelve stones in the midst of Jordan, in the place where the feet of the priests which bare the ark of the covenant stood; *and they are there unto this day.*

If the stones had not been there a long time, the writer of the book would not have used such an expression. It would have been in no wise remarkable that the twelve stones or pillars should have stood forty or fifty years: but the writer means that they had stood 500, or perhaps 1000 years.

CHAP. iv, 14. On that day the Lord magnified Joshua in the sight of all Israel; and they feared him, as they feared Moses, all the days of his life.

Again, at chapter vi, verse 27:

So the Lord was with Joshua; and his fame was noised throughout all the country.

If Joshua wrote this of himself, the words are a serious imputation of his modesty; if written by a contemporary, the information conveyed by them could hardly have been necessary; but if written by a historian in a later age, the passage becomes both natural and appropriate.

CHAP. v. 3. And Joshua made him sharp knives and circumcised the children of Israel at the hill of the foreskins.



Bishop Patrick observes on this verse :

Some understand the Hebrew words thus translated, Gibeah-haaraloth, to be the name by which the place where they were circumcised was afterwards called.

I have no doubt that the name was given to the place afterwards from the deed done there by Joshua : the expression evidently savours of a later age.

CHAP. v, 9. And the Lord said unto Joshua, "This day have I rolled away the reproach of Egypt from off you." Wherefore the name of the place is called Gilgal unto this day.

Writers are not so particular in recording the reasons why places are named, whilst the fact is fresh in the memory of every one ; and in the verse before us this mark of a later age is strengthened by the additional words *unto this day*.

CHAP. vii, v. 26. And they raised over him [Achor] a great heap of stones unto this day. So the Lord turned from the fierceness of his anger. Wherefore the name of that place was called the valley of Achor unto this day.

CHAP. viii, v. 28—29. And Joshua burnt Ai, and made it an heap for ever, even a desolation unto this day. And the king of Ai he [Joshua] hanged on a tree until eventide : and as soon as the sun was down, Joshua commanded that they should take his carcase down from the tree, and cast it at the entering of the gate of the city, and raise thereon a great heap of stones, *that remaineth* unto this day.

The words *that remaineth* do not occur in the original Hebrew : they have been added by the translators to make the sense complete. The only inference which both these last quoted passages carry with them, concerning the age when they were written, is that it was a very long time after the death of Achor in the first text, and of the king of Ai in the second. A similar inference is deduced from the verse which follows :

CHAP. ix, v. 27. And Joshua made them [the Gibeonites] that day hewers of wood and drawers of water for the congregation, and for the

altar of the Lord, *even unto this day, in the place which he should choose.*

The "place which the Lord should choose" was finally Jerusalem, and, if these words were written in the later period of the Israelitish government, the Lord had already chosen Jerusalem to be the site of his Temple and the place of his worship.

CHAP. x, v. 1. Now it came to pass, when Adonizedec king of Jerusalem had heard how Joshua had taken Ai, and had utterly destroyed it ; &c.

This chapter is full of names that did not exist until many years afterwards, some more, some less. The first is Jerusalem, which will be noticed in page 127. Bethhoron, mentioned at v. 10, was built by an Israelitish lady after the conquest, as we learn from I Chron. vii, 23, 24 :

And when he [Ephraim] went in to his wife, she conceived, and bare a son, and he called his name Beriah, because it went evil with his house. And his daughter was Sherah, who built Beth-horon the nether, and the upper, and Uzzen-sherah.

The comparison of these texts involves an anachronism. Sherah was only the fourth in descent from Jacob—thus : Joseph, Ephraim, Beriah, Sherah. If the Israelites remained 430 years in Canaan, as appears from several texts of Scripture, it is impossible that only one generation, Beriah, could have intervened between Ephraim, who was a child when Jacob went down into Egypt, and Sherah who built Bethhoron. But this subject is more extensive, and will be considered more fully hereafter.

CHAP. x, v. 13. 14. And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies. Is not this written in the book of Jasher ? So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day. And there was no day like that before it or after it, that the Lord hearkened unto the voice of a man : for the Lord fought for Israel.

Here we obtain a fact that bears with great force upon our present argument. The writer of the book of Joshua

quotes an earlier work to which he refers his readers for a more full account of the miracle which he records, namely the arresting the sun and moon in their flight, that the Israelites might be avenged on their enemies. It is impossible to conceive that Joshua himself, who wrought that miracle, could have referred his readers to another book in which a better account of it was to be found. It is far more likely that a compiler, in a later age, finding this miraculous event well described in a book still popular in his time, called the Book of Jasher, should have referred his readers to that book, for further information.

But this is not the only observation elicited by the mention made of the book of Jasher in this place. The same work is quoted in II Sam. i, 17. 18 :

And David lamented with this lamentation over Saul and over Jonathan his son. Also he bade them teach the children of Judah the use of the bow : behold it is written in the book of Jasher.

Here we learn that the book of Jasher contains the narrative of king David teaching his subjects the use of archery in war. The book of Jasher was therefore written in or after the reign of David : and the book of Joshua, which quotes the book of Joshua, must have been written later still.

The burial-place of the five kings was marked out to posterity by a lasting monument, a heap of stones which Joshua caused to be placed over the cave where they were buried.

CHAP. x. 27. And it came to pass at the time of the going down of the sun, that Joshua commanded, and they took them down off the trees, and cast them into the cave wherein they had been hid, and laid great stones in the cave's mouth, which remain *until this very day*.

CHAP. xiii. v. 13. Nevertheless the children of Israel expelled not the Geshurites nor the Maachathites : but the Geshurites and the Maachathites dwell among the Israelites until this day.

CHAP. xiv. 14. Hebron therefore became the inheritance of Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenezite *unto this day*, because that he wholly followed the Lord God of Israel. And the name of Hebron before

was Kirjath-Arba ; which Arba was a great man among the Anakims ; and the land had rest from war. [See also xv, 14—19.]

Every part of this verse shews a later writer and a later age. The city had lost its ancient name of Kirjath-arba, and was known by the name of Hebron : it had become the inheritance of Caleb, by which is implied that Caleb was dead and his descendants were in possession of it, *until this day*, i. e. for a great length of time. And this is further confirmed by the concluding words, "And the land had rest from war." The war of the invasion was over, and the children of Israel had quiet possession of the country, when the book of Joshua was written.

CHAP. xv, 8. 9. 10. And the border went up by the valley of the son of Hinnom unto the south side of the JEBUSITE; *the same is Jerusalem* : and the border went up to the top of the mountain that lieth before the valley of Hinnom westward, which is at the end of the valley of the giants northward : and the border was drawn from the top of the hill unto the fountain of the water of Nephtoah, and went out to the cities of mount Ephron ; and the border was drawn to BAALAH, *which is Kirjath-jearim* : and the border compassed from Baalah westward unto mount Seir, and passed along unto the side of mount JEARIM, *which is Chesalon*, on the north side, and went down to Beth-she mesh, and passed on to Timnah.

The observations made in Chapter 13, concerning the anachronisms which occur in the names of places, apply in all their force to this passage : we have three distinct places here mentioned, each of them designated both by its ancient and modern appellation, Jebusi, Jerusalem—Baalah, Kirjath-jearim—mount Jearim, Chesalon. We know, also, that Jebusi did not receive the name of Jerusalem until the reign of David, proving that the book, in which the word Jerusalem occurs, was not written until the reign of David, or that, if written before that time, it has since been interpolated. Of these two probabilities the former is the stronger : because we find it confirmed by the last verse of the same chapter :



CHAP. xv, 63. As for the Jebusites the inhabitants of Jerusalem the children of Judah could not drive them out: but the Jebusites dwell with the children of Judah at Jerusalem unto this day.

It has been asserted that these words can apply only to the few years which immediately followed the death of Joshua; for, say the Commentators, the Jebusites *were* then driven out, as we read the account in Judges i, 7. 8. We shall find, on enquiry, that they were not then driven out; at least, it is not so stated in Judges i, 7. 8, nor can any such meaning be inferred from the narrative there contained.

JUDGES i, 7. 8. And Adonibezek said, "Threescore and ten kings, having their thumbs and their great toes cut off, gathered their meat under my table: as I have done, so God hath requited me. And they brought him to Jerusalem, and there he died.

Now the children of Judah had fought against Jerusalem, and had taken it, and smitten it with the edge of the sword, and set the city on fire.

The Jebusites, no doubt, fled out of the city, before it was set on fire, but a portion of the city, the citadel, was certainly in their hands in the time of David, and the two nations seem to have lived together in the city and adjoining territory, at peace, during the whole time that the Judges bare rule.

CHAP. xvi, 10 And they [*the Ephraimites*] drave not out the Canaanites that dwelt in Gezer: but the Canaanites dwell among the Ephraimites unto this day, and serve under tribute.

CHAP. xvii, 12. 13. Yet the children of Manasseh could not drive out the inhabitants of those cities, but the Canaanites would dwell in the land. Yet it came to pass, when the children of Israel were waxen strong, that they put the Canaanites to tribute; but did not utterly drive them out.

Compare with this the account given in Judges i, 28—29.

It came to pass, when Israel was strong, that they put the Canaanites to tribute, and did not utterly drive them out. Neither did Ephraim

drive out the Canaanites that dwelt in Gezer but the Canaanites dwelt in Gezer among them.

CHAP. xix, 47. And the coast of the children of Dan went out too little for them: therefore the children of Dan went up to fight against Leshem [called Laish in Judges, chap. 18, v. 29.], and took it and smote it with the edge of the sword, and possessed it and dwelt therein, and called Leshem, Dan, after the name of Dan their father.

This is the same affair, which is related in detail in the 18th chapter of Judges. According to the chronology given in the margin of our Bibles, and generally received by the learned, this happened about thirty years after the death of Joshua. The anachronism is explained in the following manner by the editors of the Family Bible, quoting from Bishop Patrick and Shuckford:

It is supposed that Ezra or some other, thought good in aftertimes to insert this verse here, in order to complete the account of the Danites' possession.

If this be received as sound criticism, History will truly be brought down to a level with the most worthless pastimes that man can choose for his amusement: it will be literally, no better than an almanach, which is altered year by year to adapt it to the existing state of things. If the book of Joshua were indeed the work of the great man whose name it bears, no later historian would have ventured to impair its value by adding to or detracting from its contents.

CHAP. xxiv, 29. 30. And it came to pass after these things, that Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the Lord, died, being an hundred and ten years old. And they buried him in the border of his inheritance in Timnath-Serah, which is mount Ephraim, on the north side of the hill of Gaash.

If Joshua died at the age of 110 years, and his death is recorded in the book which passes by his name, we need no farther proof that this book could not have been written until after Joshua was dead. But this limitation of

its origin to some period after the death of Joshua must be still further qualified : for in the next verse of the same chapter we read as follows :

CHAP. xxiv, v. 31. And Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that over-lived Joshua, and which had known all the works of the Lord, that he had done for Israel.

How could Joshua write that Israel served the Lord a long time after he was dead, nay—after all those who out-lived him were dead also ? If some later writer, as Samuel or Ezra, inserted all these additions to the original work of Joshua, he would certainly have not done so in a clandestine or covert manner, but with a note attached, that “so far is the work of Joshua, and the continuation is by a later hand.” Even the monkish chroniclers have displayed this species of common honesty : for we always, or nearly always, find a mark attached to those passages which begin the writing of a new author—“*Hactenus dominus Radulfus scripsit Chronica &c.*” or “*Explicit dominus Rogerus, incipit dominus Matthæus. &c.*” Even the supposition of these additions made by later writers, goes far towards a concession of the fact which I would establish ; namely, that we have not the Hebrew writings in their original state, but that they are a compilation, put together after the nation had returned, with fresh lights and a fresh intellectual impetus, from Babylon.

## CHAPTER 15.

## THE BOOK OF JUDGES SIMILARLY EXAMINED.

The editor of the Pictorial Bible gives an account of this book, which contains many remarkable observations : I therefore copy it without abridgment :

The name of this book is taken from the title of the functionaries whose actions and administration it principally relates. This name is שופטים, *shophetim*, plural of שפט, *shophet*, a judge. This word designates the ordinary magistrates, properly called judges ; and is here also applied to the chief rulers, perhaps because *ruling* and *judging* are so intimately connected in the east, that sitting in judgment is one of the principal employments of an oriental monarch (see Gesenius in שפט.)

It is remarkable that the Carthaginians who were descended from the Tyrians and spoke Hebrew, called their chief magistrates by the same name : but the Latins, who had no such *sh*, as the Hebrews and Carthaginians had, and as we and the Germans have, wrote the word with a sharp *s*, and, adding a Latin termination, denominated them *Suffetes*. These functionaries are compared to the Roman consuls, and appear in office as well as name, to have borne considerable resemblance to the Hebrew *shophetim*, “judges.” For some observations on the Hebrew “judges,” and the nature of their administration, see the note on chap. ii, 16.

The book is easily divisible into two parts ; one ending with chap. xvi, contains the history of the Judges, from Othniel to Samson ; and the other, which occupies the rest of the book, forms a sort of appendix, relating particular transactions, which, not to interrupt the regular history, the author seems to have reserved for the end. If these transactions had been placed in order of time, we should probably have found them in a much earlier portion of the work, as the incidents related seem to have occurred not long after the death of Joshua.

The author of the book is unknown. Some ascribe it to Samuel, some to Hezekiah, and others to Ezra. The reason which has principally influenced the last determination of the authorship is found in chap. xviii, 30 : — “He and his son were priests to the tribe of Dan until



the day of the captivity of the land.” But this may have referred to the captivity of the ark among the Philistines, or to some particular captivity of the tribe of Dan, or rather of that part of the tribe settled in the north; or the reference may have been to both circumstances. It is also possible that the clause, “until the day of the captivity of the land,” may actually have been added after the captivity. That the book itself was not then written is evident from the absence of Chaldee words, which so often occur in the books which we know to have been posterior to that event. Most of the Jewish and Christian commentators assign the authorship to Samuel; probably because internal evidence places it pretty clearly about his time, and in his time he is the most likely person to whom the authorship could be attributed. That it was written after the establishment of the monarchical government, appears from the habit which the author has of saying that the event he is relating happened in the time when “there was no king in Israel;” which renders it evident that there was a king when he wrote. But that it was written very soon after the establishment of kingly government is no less clear from other passages. Thus we see, from chap. i, 21, that the Jebusites were still in Jerusalem in the time of the author; but this ceased to be the case in the time of David, by whom they were expelled from that city. (2 Sam. v, 6). So also, in 2 Sam. vi, 21, there is a distinct and precise reference to a fact recorded in Judges ix, 53, which seems another proof that this book was written before the second book of Samuel: but this does not appear to be of a conclusive nature; as the fact may have been known to David, even had the book of Judges not been then written. Upon the whole, there is little question that the book was composed, in its present form, either in the reign of Saul, or during the first seven years of the reign of David: and this renders it more probable that it was compiled, from the public registers and records, by Samuel, than by any of the other prophets, priests or kings, to whom it is assigned.\*

The chronology of this book is attended with much difficulty, and is stated by various chronologers with very serious difference. This chiefly arises from the period of servitudes, being by some counted as

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\* The uncertainty which attends this quest on, is admitted by all writers.

It is unknown by whom the book of the Judges was composed, although most probably by different persons at different times; as it appears to be a collection of detached pieces of history, in which the chronological order is not strictly observed, and in some places is not easy to adjust. These accounts relate to a period extremely tumultuous and troublesome; a period of barbarism ignorance and anarchy; in which the Israelites, almost continually harassed by intestine commotions, oppressed by foreign enemies or employed in repelling their aggressions, had little leisure to attend to the accuracy of their national annals. BIGLAND'S LETTERS ON HISTORY, page 75—76.

part of the years of the judges, while others count them separately; and also from judges being thought by some to have been successive, whom others consider to have been contemporary in different parts of Palestine. There are some also, who prolong the account by supposing several anarchies or interregnums, the duration of which the history does not mention. The result of Dr Hales's elaborate investigations gives 498 years (B. C. 1603 to B. C. 1110) from the passage of the Jordan to the election of Saul; and 400 years (B. C. 1582 to 1182) from the death of Joshua to the death of Samson, which is the period more peculiarly comprehended in the present book. The period is, however, frequently stated as little exceeding 300 years.

It may be gathered from this extract that those who assign an early date to this book, are obliged to admit that it could not at all events have been written earlier than the reign of Saul or David, that is 300, or 400, and according to Dr Hales, nearly 500 years after the passage of the river Jordan. I shall proceed to enumerate the passages found in the book itself, which give evidence of a late origin; among these are those texts which have led writers to limit its composition as not later, at all events, than the reign of David, but which may be shewn by no means to warrant such an inference.

CHAP. i, 21. And the children of Benjamin did not drive out the Jebusites that inhabited Jerusalem; but the Jebusites dwell with the children of Benjamin in Jerusalem unto this day.

The Jebusites were certainly reduced to submission by David, but not *driven out*: they still dwelt in the land with the Israelites: the words 'unto this day' may therefore apply to the time after the Captivity. See pp. 127—128.

CHAP. i, 26. And the man went into the land of the Hittites, and built a city, and called the name thereof Luz: which is the name thereof unto this day.

CHAP. xvii, 6. In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes.

CHAP. xviii, i. In those days there was no king in Israel: and in

those days the tribe of the Danites sought them an inheritance to dwell in; for unto that day all their inheritance had not fallen unto them among the tribes of Israel.

CHAP. xviii, 30. And the children of Dan set up the graven image: and Jonathan, the son of Gershom, the son of Manasseh, he and his sons were priests to the tribe of Dan until the day of the captivity of the land.

The Babylonish ‘captivity’ is called the ‘captivity’ *par excellence*. The plain meaning of the words cannot be evaded; and this book was written after the Babylonish captivity.

CHAP. xix, i. And it came to pass in those days, when there was no king in Israel, that there was a certain Levite sojourning on the side of mount Ephraim, who took to him a concubine out of Bethlehem-judah.

## CHAPTER 16.

### THE BOOK OF RUTH EXAMINED.

The book of Ruth, as has been already said, is properly part of the book of Judges, from which it has been separated, for no very obvious reasons. From its brevity it is not likely to contain many passages to aid us in our present enquiry. Those which I have discovered, are the following:

CHAP. i, v. 1. Now it came to pass in the days when the Judges ruled, that there was a famine in the land.

This was written after the Judges had ceased to rule;

and consequently the work is not contemporary with Ruth, who lived "when the Judges ruled."

CHAP. iv, v. 21—22. And Salmon begat Boaz, and Boaz begat Obed, and Obed begat Jesse, and Jesse begat David.

Bishop Patrick's note to this is deserving of notice:

Salmon married Rahab, and therefore lived at the time of the Israelites' first entrance into Canaan. Now between this period and the birth of David, are computed 366 years. Thus, as only four generations are mentioned, we must either suppose that some names of persons, who come between, are omitted, (for which we have no warrant), or that, as is more probable, Salmon, Boaz, Obed, and Jesse, all had their children born to them at a very advanced period of their lives.

I propose to adopt a different and more natural solution of the difficulty. In Chronicles ii, 11, Salmon is named 'Salma;' which shews that there are some doubtful points in this genealogy. This was likely to be the case; for the book being compiled, out of original papers, like all the rest of the Jewish History, after the captivity of Babylon, the compilers were likely to be puzzled by many discrepancies of this nature, and, choosing to preserve, as much as possible, the form of their original sources, they have retained even their errors also.

## CHAPTER 17.

### FIRST BOOK OF SAMUEL EXAMINED.

The two books of Samuel form but one in the Hebrew Canon. In the Septuagint and Vulgate translations they



are called the first and second books of Kings, and those which we call the first and second books of Kings, are termed the third and fourth books of Kings. This diversity is to be regretted; ancient histories should, as far as is possible, be kept in their original form. There seems to be no adequate reason for classifying these books, as they are classified in our Bibles: for they contain quite as much of the history of David as of Samuel. But the impression prevailed that Samuel was their author; and as Protestants, in endeavouring to run counter to Roman Catholics, have magnified the importance of the Old Testament, exactly in proportion as they have decried the use of reason, the translators have so arranged the books as to produce the most striking effect; and thus an individual existence has been given to that which has none, but which really is only a part of the whole. Yet notwithstanding, first, the separation of Samuel from Kings, and, then, its division into two parts, the work bears on the face of it the strong fact that it could not have been written by Samuel: for the 25th chapter of the first book begins with the words "*And Samuel died*"! Thus more than half of the whole was obviously composed by a later writer. But we shall see, by an examination of the book in order, that the whole of it owes its origin to a date later than that of Samuel.

CHAP, v, v. 5. Therefore neither the priests of Dagon nor any that come into Dagon's house, tread on the threshold of Dagon in Ashdod unto this day.

Bishop Patrick has a note on the words 'unto this day':

The day when Samuel wrote this book: when the events happened, he was a youth: but the book was written when he was advanced in years.

The space of time between this event and Samuel's death was about forty years,—not long enough to justify the expression 'unto this day.' It must not be taken for granted that Samuel wrote this book; and the verse before us tells

as plainly as words can express, that Samuel must have been dead many years, perhaps centuries, when it was written : but the commentators have not seen the natural force of the words, on account of the erroneous opinion that Samuel was the writer, with which they would make the narrative harmonize.

CHAP. vi, 18. And the golden mice, according to the number of all the cities of the Philistines belonging to the five lords, both of fenced cities, and of country villages, even unto the great stone of Abel, whereon they set down the ark of the Lord : which stone remaineth unto this day in the field of Joshua the Bethshemite.

CHAP. vii, 15. And Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life.

Bp Patrick's interpretation of this stubborn verse may be quoted, but to be as speedily rejected ; because it perverts the plain meaning of words, for the purpose of making them support a pre-conceived theory :

As Samuel was the author of this book he could not speak literally of "all the days of his life" : the sense probably is, that he was so diligent in the discharge of his office, that he gave himself no rest, but sat to judge causes every day.

It is almost a waste of words to reply to such a manifest perversion of the meaning. "All the days of his life" means "the whole of his life" not "every day" : and the use of these words shews that Samuel could not have been the author of the book. But the commentator, taking for granted that Samuel *was* the author of the book, has twisted the meaning of words to suit this pre-conceived notion.

In I Sam. ix, 9. 10, we read these words.

(Beforetime in Israel, when a man went to enquire of God, thus he spake, "Come and let us go to the seer :" for he that is now called a prophet was beforetime called a seer.) Then said Saul to his servant, "Well said ; come, let us go." So they went unto the city where the man of God was. And as they went up the hill to the city, they found

young maidens going out to draw water, and said to them, "Is the seer here?"

In explaining this passage, the editors of the Family Bible try to make it appear that the words *now* and *before-time* imply no greater interval of time than that which passed in Samuel's own life-time. They quote as follows, from Bishop Patrick, Pyle and Dr Gray :

The word *now* refers to the time when this book was written, probably the latter part of Samuel's life. The verse explains that, at the time when Saul was appointed king, the Hebrew word *Roeh*, "a seer of secret things," was usually applied to inspired persons ; but that afterwards the word *Nabi* or "prophet," (which had been very anciently known, as appears from the books of Moses,) came into common use. *Bp Patrick, Pyle.* The word *Nabi*, "prophet," was in use in the time of Moses or Abraham ; see Gen. xx, 7 ; but then it only implied a man favoured of God ; whereas, in the time of Samuel, it was appropriated to one who foresaw future events.

These remarks contain both what is true and what is false. It is evident that the word *roeh* "seer" is the older term of the two, and we find that it is the word which Saul and his companions actually used—"Is the *seer* here?" The word *seer*, therefore, was used in Samuel's life-time, and there is no proof that the word *nabi*, "prophet," superseded it during the life of Samuel. Indeed there is a verse in the second book of Samuel, which shews that the old word *seer* was still in use after the death of Samuel :

The king [i. e. David] said also unto Zadok the priest, "Art not thou a *seer*? return into the city in peace, and your two sons with you, Ahimaaz thy son, and Jonathan the son of Abiathar." xv, 27.

The book of Samuel was, consequently, not written by Samuel. The words *now* and *beforetime* denote too long an interval to allow room for such a supposition. But yet the word *nabi* "prophet"—not in use in the time of Samuel—actually occurs in the Pentateuch and other books of

the Old Testament, as, for example, in Genesis xx, 7, Ex. vii, 1. xv, 20 ; Num. xi, 29. xii, 6 ; Deut. xiii, 1, 5. xviii, 15. xxxiv, 10 ; Jud. iv, 4. vi, 8 ; I Sam. iii, 20. ix, 9 ; II Sam. vii, 2 ; I Kings xii, 14. In the later of these passages it is not to be wondered that the word rendered "prophet" should be found, because the writer of the first book of Samuel tells us that it had come into use in his time, and therefore must have been a common word afterwards ; but that it should occur in the book of Genesis proves either that Genesis was written after the introduction of the word into the Hebrew language, or that the writer of the first book of Samuel is wrong in describing the word as modern, or that the meaning of the word had changed. I believe that the word was actually a new word in the Hebrew language introduced after the Babylonish captivity, and consequently that the first book of Samuel, as well as the Pentateuch, were written after that captivity.

The two next extracts cannot have been written by Samuel, on account of the terms of praise in which he is spoken of : and, as they occur in the first part of the book, we may infer that no portion of the work was written by Samuel himself :

CHAP. xii. v. 11. And the Lord sent Jerubbaal, and Bedan, and Jephthah, and Samuel, and delivered you out of the hand of your enemies on every side, and ye dwelled safe.

CHAP. xii, v. 18. So Samuel called unto the Lord ; and the Lord sent thunder and rain that day ; and all the people greatly feared the Lord and Samuel.

The next extracts would prove, if proof were wanting, that Samuel could not have written the whole of this book, for his death is recorded in the extracts.

CHAP. xxv, v. 1. And Samuel died ; and all the Israelites were gathered together, and lamented him, and buried him in his house at Ramah.

CHAP. xxviii, v. 3. Now Samuel was dead, and all Israel had lamented him, and buried him in Ramah, even in his own city.



CHAP. xxx, v. 25. And it was so from that day forward, that he made it a statute and an ordinance for Israel unto this day.

There are also some passages, even in the first book of Samuel, in which the distinction between Judah and Israel is clearly indicated. The book was therefore certainly written after the revolt of Jeroboam and the ten tribes. This took place about ninety years after the death of Samuel; the book, therefore, cannot be considered as a contemporary record. The passages which allude to the division of the kingdom, are these :

CHAP. xviii, v. 16. But all Israel and Judah loved David, because he went out and came in before them.

CHAP. xxvii, 6. Then Achish gave him Ziglag that day : wherefore Ziglag pertaineth unto the kings of Judah unto this day.

## CHAPTER 18.

### SECOND BOOK OF SAMUEL EXAMINED.

The Second book of Samuel labours under greater difficulties, as regards its authorship, than any of the preceding writings. Its narrative avowedly and manifestly begins long after the death of Samuel, who, consequently, had nothing whatever to do with writing it. The commentators have supposed Gad or Nathan to have been the

author, but they might with more reason have referred it to the time of Ezra, Nehemiah, or some later writer. Its contents are susceptible of the same examination which has been directed towards the books preceding it in the Jewish canon.

The allusions to the two separate kingdoms of Judah and Israel, which were noticed in the last chapter, occur again here :

CHAP. ii, 4—10. And the men of Judah came, and there they anointed David king over the house of Judah. . . . (v. 10.) Ishbosheth Saul's son was forty years old when he began to reign over Israel and reigned two years. But the house of Judah followed David.

CHAP. iv, 3. And the Beerothites fled to Gittaim, and were sojourners there until this day.

CHAP. v, 5. In Hebron he reigned over Judah seven years and six months, and in Jerusalem he reigned thirty and three years over all Israel and Judah.

This must have been written after the division of the kingdom.

In verse 7 of the same chapter are the words :

Nevertheless David took the strong hold of Zion: the same is the city of David.

The latter part of the verse is introduced to explain, that the strong hold of Zion was the same which was called afterwards the city of David.

In the 9th verse, again, of the same chapter, we read :

So David dwelt in the fort, and called it the city of David. And David built round about from Millo and inward.

Note by Dr Pococke :

—*from Millo*] From the place where Solomon afterwards built Millo; for it appears from I Kings ix, 15, that it was not built till Solomon's reign.

If this be true, the books of Samuel must have been written,—at least as late as the reign of king Solomon. So

must the book of Judges ; for Millo is mentioned there also :

JUDGES ix, 6. And all the men of Shechem gathered together, and all the house of Millo, and went and made Abimelech king, by the plain of the pillar that was in Shechem.

The house of Millo, or, as it is in the Hebrew, Beth-millo, occurs again in II Kings xii, 20 :

And his servants arose, and made a conspiracy, and slew Joash in the house of Millo, which goeth down to Silla.

II SAM. xvi, 23. And the counsel of Ahithophel, which he counselled in those days, was as if a man had enquired at the oracle of God : so was all the counsel of Ahithophel both with David and with Absalom.

CHAP. xviii, 18. Now Absalom in his life-time had taken and reared up for himself a pillar, which is in the king's dale : for he said, " I have no son to keep my name in remembrance " : and he called the pillar after his own name : and it is called unto this day, Absalom's place.

The 23rd chapter of II Samuel begins with these words :

Now these be the last words of David. David the son of Jesse said, and the man who was raised up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet psalmist of Israel, said :

Then follows the song which David spake on this occasion ; followed abruptly by the catalogue of David's mighty men of war : and in v. 1 of chap. xxiv begins a new subject, which shews that David was still engaged in the duties of active life :

And again the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and he moved David against them to say, Go, number Israel and Judah.

These abrupt methods of writing mark, not an original author but a compiler, who collects original documents together, copies them one after another and makes insertions, sometimes for the purpose of connecting them into one history, and, at other times of explaining those passages which his readers might otherwise find it hard to

understand. No other mode of interpretation will account for the inversions of order, the extraordinary repetitions, and unusual method of narration which the books of the Old Testament present.

## CHAPTER 19.

### THE TWO BOOKS OF KINGS EXAMINED.

As it is generally admitted that the two books of Kings were written after the return of the Israelites from Babylon, it is not absolutely necessary to examine them for the purpose of collecting the evidence which they furnish. But there are certain passages in both these books which, besides proving the assertion that has been made above, yield other evidence of a significant character respecting the true nature of Jewish History and Prophecy; and, besides, these passages are so remarkably similar to those gathered from the preceding books, that they warrant the inference of a common origin.

Such are the following, in which the distinction between Judah and Israel is so plainly marked that it was evidently employed by the writer as a long established fact:

I Kings i, 35. (*David speaks*) Then ye shall come up after him, that



he may come and sit upon my throne ; for he shall be king in my stead : and I have appointed him to be ruler over Israel and Judah.

CHAP. iv, v. 1. So king Solomon was king over all Israel.

CHAP. iv, 20. Judah and Israel were many, as the sand which is by the sea in multitude.

CHAP. iv, v. 25. And Judah and Israel dwelt safely &c.

CHAP. iv, v. 21. And Solomon reigned over all kingdoms from the river unto the land of the Philistines, and unto the border of Egypt ; they brought presents, and served Solomon all the days of his life.

The *river* must here mean the Euphrates, not the Jordan ; for Solomon reigned to a great distance beyond the Jordan east-ward. This designation of the Euphrates as *the river*, implies that the writer was well acquainted with it ; that is to say, he wrote this account after the nation had dwelt at Babylon upon its banks.

CHAP. ix, v. 11....(Now Hiram the king of Tyre had furnished Solomon with cedar trees and fir trees, and with gold, according to all his desire,) that then king Solomon gave Hiram twenty cities in the land of Galilee. . . . (v. 13) And he [Hiram] said, "What cities are these which thou hast given me, my brother ?" And he called them the land of Cabul unto this day.

CHAP. xii, v. 19. So Israel rebelled against the house of David unto this day.

CHAP. xiii, v. 2. And he cried against the altar in the word of the Lord, and said, "O altar, altar, thus saith the Lord ; Behold, a child shall be born unto the house of David, Josiah by name ; and upon thee shall he offer the priests of the high places that burn incense upon thee and men's bones shall be burnt upon thee."

As this prophecy concerning Josiah was recorded after the events had happened, the record of it may probably have received a species of colouring from the pen of the writer, as is likely to occur in such cases. This consideration is of great importance in our estimate of such things : all the original prophecies, known to have been written before the fulfilment, are found to be obscure, and even at present after so many centuries have passed, it is uncertain whether many of them have been fulfilled or not.

I Kings xiv, 15. For the Lord shall smite Israel, as a reed is shaken in the water, and he shall root up Israel out of this good land, which he gave to their fathers, and shall scatter them beyond the river, because they have made their groves, provoking the Lord to anger.

II Kings viii, 22. Yet Edom revolted from under the hand of Judah unto this day.

The Family Bible adds this note :

*unto this day*] Unto the time when this book was written, which was not long after this revolt.

Yet the editors of the Family admit that the books were written probably by Ezra; and by the date in the margin attached to the revolt of Edom, B. C. 892, it appears that nearly 400 years intervened between the revolt and this relation of it.

II Kings x, 27. And they brake down the image of Baal, and brake down the house of Baal, and made it a draught house unto this day.

— xiii, 23. And the Lord was gracious unto them, and had compassion on them, and had respect unto them, because of his covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and would not destroy them, neither cast he them from his presence as yet.

— xiv, 7. He slew of Edom in the valley of salt ten thousand, and took Selah by war, and called the name of it Joktheel unto this day.

— xvii, 29. Howbeit every nation made gods of their own, and put them in the houses of the high places, which the Samaritans had made, every nation in their cities wherein they dwelt... (v. 34) Unto this day they do after the former manners: they fear not the Lord, neither do they after their statutes, or after their ordinances, or after the law and commandment which the Lord commanded the children of Jacob, whom he named Israel.

— xxv, 27. And it came to pass in the seven and thirtieth year of the captivity of Jehoiachin king of Judah, in the twelfth month, on the seven and twentieth day of the month, that Evil-merodach king of Babylon in the year that he began to reign did lift up the head of Jehoiachin king of Judah out of prison.

The event here recorded happened about the year B. C. 562, or 26 years before the date usually assigned for the return of the Jews from the Captivity of Babylon. The

Books of Kings, in which this date occurs, could not have been written before, but after the events which are recorded in them.

## CHAPTER 20.

ERRORS, DISCREPANCIES, ANACHRONISMS &c. IN THE HISTORICAL  
BOOKS GENERALLY, SHEWING THAT THEY ARE NOT CONTEMPORARY  
RECORDS.

In the preceding chapters I have attempted to shew from internal evidence, discoverable in the several books of the Old Testament, that they are not the productions of Moses, Joshua and Samuel, to whom they are commonly attributed, but are rather to be taken collectively as a compilation from original records, made at a time when the Israelitish people began to shew a disposition, common to all nations, to scrutinize the history of their remote ancestors. That this view of the matter is well founded seems fairly to result from the examination to

which the books of the Old Testament have been severally submitted. The same inference will follow from other instances of internal evidence gathered from the same books taken collectively, differing somewhat in character from those already brought forward, but equally valuable for the purpose of establishing my present argument.

Under this head will fall all those historical narratives, involving errors, discrepancies, anachronisms, and other inconsistencies, which Moses, Joshua and Samuel, as far as possibility is concerned, *may* undoubtedly have written, but which it is extremely improbable that teachers and prophets as they were, *should* have written. The collective weight of these passages will be almost as great as is furnished by those which have been produced in the last six chapters, and which certainly could not have been written by the authors to whom they are ascribed.

### 1. *Two versions of the Ten Commandments.*

A formidable objection to the originality of the Hebrew Bible arises from the discrepancies between one part of it and another, not of a nature to invalidate its historical truth, but shewing, merely, that the writer of one part of it had not seen other parts in which the same events had been differently described.

Such a discrepancy is found between the Ten Commandments, as they are noticed in the 20th chapter of Exodus, and again in the 5th chapter of Deuteronomy.

The two copies of the commandments are here subjoined in parallel columns :

EXODUS XX, 1—17.

DEUTERONOMY V, 7—21.

1. Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

1. Thou shalt have none other gods before me.

2. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth.

2. Thou shalt not make thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the waters beneath the earth.

Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them : for I the Lord thy God am a

Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them ; for I the Lord thy God am a



jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me ;

And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.

3. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain ; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

4. Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.

Six days shalt thou labour and do all thy work :

But the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God : in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man servant, nor thy maid servant, nor thy

cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates.

For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day :

wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.

5. Honour thy father and thy mother :

that thy days may be long

upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee :

6. Thou shalt not kill.

7. Thou shalt not commit adultery.

8. Thou shalt not steal.

9. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.

10. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house,

thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor

his manservant, nor his maidservant nor his ox nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's.

jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me :

And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.

3. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain ; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

4. Remember the sabbath day to sanctify it

Six days thou shalt labour and do all thy work :

But the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God : in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy manservant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thine

ox, nor thine ass, nor any of thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates :

that thy man-servant and thy maid-servants may rest as well as thou.

And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty hand, and by a stretched out arm :

Therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath day.

5. Honour thy father and thy mother :

as the Lord thy God hath commanded thee :

that thy days may be prolonged,

and that it may go well with thee

in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

6. Thou shalt not kill.

7. Neither shalt thou commit adultery.

8. Neither shalt thou steal.

9. Neither shalt thou bear false witness against thy neighbour.

10. Neither shalt thou desire thy neighbour's wife,

neither shalt thou covet thy neighbour's house his field or

his manservant, or his maidservant,

his ox, or his ass, or any thing that is thy neighbour's.

These two copies of the same document must have been handed down in two different and separate works, and the compiler, whoever he was, that drew up the existing collection which forms the canon of Old Testament, inserted both of the copies, because they appear to be of equal authority, without being deterred by the somewhat inconsistent reasons which the two copies give for the observance of the Fourth Commandment.

## *2. Inconsistencies concerning Abraham and Sarah.*

Two extraordinary inconsistencies are found in the history of Abraham and Sarah, which, as far as I can discover, have not been noticed by any of the commentators. Abraham is said to have been 100 years old, and Sarah 90, at the birth of Isaac, as appears by Genesis, xvii, 17 :

Then Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed, and said in his heart, "Shall a child be born unto him that is an hundred years old, and shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear ?

At the distance of three chapters we find that Sarah passes for Abraham's sister, and is carried away to the court of Abimelech, no doubt on account of her beauty.

GEN. xx, 2. And Abraham said of Sarah his wife "She is my sister : " and Abimelech king of Gerar sent, and took Sarah.

This surely could not have happened after she was ninety years old. The events have probably been misplaced by a compiler ; as has also been the case with the second discrepancy which occurs in the same part of the history. Sarah was ninety years old, as just stated, when Isaac was born—in fact she was already an old woman : and this is repeated in Genesis, xxi, 2 :

Sarah conceived, and bare Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him.

She lived thirty-seven years longer :

GEN. xxiii, 1—2. And Sarah was an hundred and seven and twenty years old: these were the years of the life of Sarah. And Sarah died in Kirjath-arba: the same is Hebron in the land of Canaan: and Abraham came to mourn for Sarah, and to weep for her.

Abraham was therefore 137 years old when Sarah died: yet he is said to have married again, and to have begotten six children.

GEN. xxv, 1—2. Then again Abraham took a wife, and her name was Keturah. And she bare him Zimran, and Jokshan, and Medan, and Midian, and Ishbak, and Shuah.

This account is repugnant to what went before. If Abraham, at the age of 100 years, laughed at the idea of his having a son, how does it happen that, when he was 137 years old, he marries again, and begets six children? We may easily believe that he was little likely, from physical causes, to have a son and heir at the age of one hundred years, and this improbability was likely to increase every succeeding year. There is no reason for believing that the children which were born to Abraham from Keturah, were children of promise, like Isaac; and the only supposition by which the inconsistency can be explained, is that Abraham had taken Keturah to wife at an earlier period of his life: for polygamy was common in those days, and no less likely to have been practised by Abraham than it notoriously was by Abraham's grandson, Jacob, in the case of Leah, Rachel, and their two handmaids his concubines. This explanation, however, compels us to believe, not that Moses wrote the narrative, but a compiler in a later age, who, as is often done, ranges in successive dates events which really were contemporaneous.

### 3. *Different accounts of the length of time which the Israelites sojourned in Egypt.*

Among the many chronological difficulties which meet the reader of the Old Testament, may be noticed the un-

certainty about the length of time which the Israelites spent in Egypt. The first impression which the Bible narrative tends to convey is that 400 years passed between the settling of Jacob's family in Egypt and the Exode under Moses. This was the period of time foretold to Abraham in Genesis.

But there is a variation in this number in other passages where the subject is referred to : for in Exodus xii, 40-41, the number is stated, not at 400, but at 430 years. The same variation is observable in the two places of the New Testament, where the subject is mentioned. In Acts, vii, 6, we read four hundred, but in Galatians, iii, 17, four hundred and thirty years. The difference between these numbers is not important, if the book in which it occurs is to be judged by the same standard as other works of history ; but if, on the other hand, it is to be considered as possessing an original authority which commands our belief without enquiry, and forbids us to test its accuracy, the variation of thirty years becomes a serious discrepancy, militating greatly against its pretension to infallibility.

It remains to adduce the passages where the subject is mentioned both in the Old and New Testaments, and to endeavour to solve the difficulty which they present.

Exodus xii, 40-41. Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, who dwelt in Egypt, was four hundred and thirty years.

And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years, even the selfsame day it came to pass, that all the hosts of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt.

#### Note in the Family Bible :

*The sojourning of the children of Egypt,*] This includes their fathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob ; and their sojourning in the land of Canaan as well as in Egypt. From the time of Abraham's coming from Charran into the land of Canaan, when this sojourning began, till the going of his descendants out of Egypt, was just 430 years. From his arrival in Canaan to the birth of Isaac was 25 years ; Isaac was 60 years old when



he begat Jacob; and Jacob was 130 years old when he went down into Egypt, making together 215 years: and from his family's coming into Egypt till their departure was just 215 more.

This note alters the language of the text, but does not explain it. How can the "sojourning of the children of Israel who dwelt in Egypt" be supposed to begin 215 years before any of the children of Israel ever were in Egypt? Abraham certainly visited Egypt, 215 years before, but he did not sojourn there, and he was not one of the 'children of Israel'; for Israel was the name of his grandson Jacob. Besides which it is plainly written that the hosts of the Lord, i. e. the children of Israel, came *out* of Egypt, "on the self-same day," i. e. as they had come *in*, 430 years before. This cannot apply to Abraham, whose visit to Egypt had nothing to do with the slavery of his posterity in that country so many years afterwards.

Neither is it certain that 215 is the correct number of years between the visit of Abraham and the journey of Jacob, when he went to settle with his family in Egypt. We find in Genesis xii, 4, that

Abram was seventy five years old when he departed out of Haran :

but we are not told that he went directly into Egypt: he may have resided some years in Canaan before he went down into Egypt, and so the interval would have been less than 215 years by the exact number of years that he remained first in Canaan.

It is also without good grounds that the commentators have decided that 215 years passed between the settling of Jacob's family in Egypt and the time of the Exodus. The Bible furnishes but very slender data for ascertaining the exact length of this interval. In Exodus vi, 16—20, we learn that Levi lived 137 years, his son Kohath 133, whose son Amram lived 134 years, whose son Moses was 80 years old, when he led the Israelites out of Egypt. But these

dates do not supply a total of 215 years; though they seem, by exhibiting four generations, to bear some reference to Genesis xv, 13, where the promise, made originally to Abraham, is found :

Gen. xv, 13. And he [God] said unto Abram, "Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years: And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance. And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age. But in the fourth generation they shall come hitherto again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full.

Here we have a notice of 400 years, extending, it would seem, through four generations; which must clearly be counted from Jacob and not from Abraham, for if we reckon from Abraham, we make six generations, Isaac, Jacob, Levi, Kohath, Amram, Moses. Thus, we are involved in a double difficulty: if the sojourning lasted 430 years, it runs through six generations; but if it runs through only four generations, it may have lasted no more than 215 years. Bishops Patrick and Kidder have annotated on the last passage, as if it were clear and intelligible like any part of history ancient or modern, and presented no difficulty whatever to the critical enquirer.

And he said unto Abram, &c.] Three things were to befall Abram's seed: 1st That they "should be a stranger in a land not theirs;" and they sojourned partly in Canaan, partly in Egypt: 2dly, That they should "serve;" and they did serve the Egyptians: 3dly, They should be "afflicted;" and so the Israelites were in a great degree, a long time before they came out of Egypt. The time from the birth of Isaac to the deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt was 400 years.

But this is an evasion, not an explanation of the text—for the "affliction," the "servitude," did not begin in Canaan, but in Egypt, and it was to last, either 400 or 430 years, for this point now cannot be cleared up, and the

same variation is found in the New Testament also, where a reference is made to the sojourning in Egypt.

ACTS vii, 6. [*The high-priest speaks*] and God spake on this wise, That his [*Abraham's*] seed should sojourn in a strange land; and that they should bring them into bondage, and entreat them evil 400 years.

But this evilentreating according to the commentators lasted much less than even 215 years, for Jacob was treated well by the Egyptians whilst he was in Egypt, and so were his family for many years, until the new king arose "who knew not Joseph."

GALATIANS iii, 17. And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect.

From all these texts taken together I cannot see how we can avoid the inference that 400 or 430 years is the space of time that passed whilst the Israelites were in Egypt and not whilst they were *partly* in Egypt. Even the last passage from St Paul's epistle leads to the same inference, though some have brought it to prove that the 430 years must be reckoned from Abraham. But surely the promise was made to Isaac and to Jacob also, and not to Abraham only. The difficulty which these inconsistencies present can only be solved by the supposition that the book was written long after the events which it records, and at a time when it was impossible to arrive with certainty at the exact chronology of an age so long gone by.

#### 4. *Discrepancies in the history of David and Saul*

Another discrepancy is observable between the two accounts of David's introduction to Saul, as related, the one in I Sam. xvi, 14—21, the other in I Sam. xvii, 38—00.

I SAMUEL xvi, 14 — 21. But the spirit of the Lord departed from Saul and an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him. And Saul's servants said unto him, "Behold now, an evil spirit from the Lord troubleth thee.

Let our lord now command thy servants, which are before thee, to seek out a man, who is a cunning player on an harp : and it shall come to pass, when the evil spirit from God is upon thee, that he shall play with his hand, and thou shalt be well."

And Saul said unto his servants, "Provide me now a man that can play well, and bring him to me."

Then answered one of the servants, and said, "Behold, I have seen a son of Jesse the Bethlehemite, that is cunning in playing, and a mighty valiant man, and a man of war, and prudent in matters, and a comely person, and the Lord is with him."

Wherefore Saul sent messengers unto Jesse, and said "Send me David thy son, which is with the sheep."

And Jesse took an ass laden with bread, and a bottle of wine, and a kid, and sent them by David his son unto Saul.

And David came to Saul, and stood before him : and he loved him greatly ; and he became his armour-bearer.

It is difficult to reconcile this with the account given in the 17th chapter of the same book, where are related the circumstances which preceded and followed the battle between David and Goliath. The reader will remember that the two armies were drawn up in array, when Goliath of Gath challenges the Israelites to single combat. At this moment, the stripling David comes to see his brothers, and asks what shall be given to the man who should kill the Philistine. Then follows this narrative :

I SAMUEL xvii, 28. And Eliab his eldest brother heard when he spake unto the men ; and Eliab's anger was kindled against David, and he said, "Why camest thou down hither ? and with whom hast thou left those few sheep in the wilderness ? I know thy pride, and the naughtiness of thine heart ; for thou art come down that thou mightest see the battle." And David said, "What have I now done ? Is there not a cause ?" And he turned from him toward another, and spake after the same manner : and the people answered him again after the former manner. And when the words were heard which David spake, they rehearsed them before Saul : and he sent for him. And David said to Saul "Let no man's heart fail because of him ; thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine. &c."



The account of the battle in which David slays the Philistine, needs not to be extracted ; at verse 55 we read :

And when Saul saw David go forth against the Philistine, he said unto Abner, the captain of the host, "Abner, whose son is this youth?" And Abner said, "As thy soul liveth, O king, I cannot tell." And the king said, "Enquire thou whose son the stripling is." And as David returned from the slaughter of the Philistine, Abner took him, and brought him before Saul with the head of the Philistine in his hand, And Saul said to him, "Whose son art thou, thou young man?" And David answered, "I am the son of thy servant Jesse the Bethlehemite."

These two accounts do not agree together. If David, according to the first of them, was already "a mighty valiant man, and a man of war, and prudent in matters," before he played on the harp to Saul, how could he be afterwards described as a "stripling" and as unused to armour, when he fought with the Philistine? Again: If David had been the armour-bearer of Saul who "loved him greatly," how should Saul afterwards have been ignorant of his very name? The explanation of the discrepancy may be this. The two accounts were originally independent of one another, and were afterwards united by some compiler who did not perceive that they were irreconcilable in the points above mentioned, though in their main features, equally founded upon fact.

It is not, however, impossible that the compiler has added details by way of ornament to his narrative : for he gives us a dialogue as having passed between the champions : but does not tell us in what language they spoke. The Philistines and Israelites certainly did not at this time speak the same language : or we should not find them speaking a different language four or five centuries afterwards, as we read in Nehemiah, xiii, 23 :

In those days also saw I [i. e. Nehemiah] Jews that had married wives of Ashdod, of Ammon, and of Moab. And their children spake half in the speech of Ashdod, and could not speak in the Jews' language, but according to the language of each people.

Ashdod was one of the five cities of the Philistines, and its inhabitants, having always maintained their independence, retained also their native language, still distinct from that of the Israelites as late as the time of Nehemiah.

The dialogue between David and Goliath is similar to those which we find in Homer as passing between the various champions of Greece and Troy: but neither can these be received as other than the embellishments of the poet: for Hector and Achilles, Ajax and Æneas, spoke different languages, and could not have understood a word of the taunts and threats which they so liberally discharged the one against the other.

#### 5. *Inaccuracy concerning Jacob's children.*

In Genesis xxxv, 26, we read—after a list of Jacob's children—

These are the sons of Jacob, which were born to him in Padan-Aram.

But it is well known that Benjamin was born, some years after Jacob returned to Canaan. The text therefore is inaccurate, and creates a serious difficulty, if we suppose that Moses, writing in the presence of God, could have been liable to such an error. If, again, “some careless or injudicious transcriber,” as Dr Shuckford supposes, “finding the words *in Padan-Aram* in Gen. xlv, 15, might add them here also &c. &c.” our want of confidence is merely transferred from Moses to the book itself; it is impossible to fix limits to this work of interpolation, and the only safe ground for the enquirer is that furnished by the supposition that the compiler put together his account long after the events had happened, and when no more certain information could be procured.

An error is found also in the other catalogue of Jacob's children, who accompanied him into Egypt. The names

occupy from verse 8 to 25 of Genesis xlv. In verse 26 it is said;

All the souls that came with Jacob into Egypt, which came out of his loins, besides Jacob's sons' wives, all the souls were three score and six.

This total is erroneous, for the names, added properly, amount to sixty seven; and a still greater difference is found between the Hebrew text and the Septuagint in the 27th verse: the former makes "all the souls of the house of Jacob" to be "three score and ten:" whereas the latter states them to have been seventy five.

We might set aside the authority of the Septuagint as inferior to that of the Hebrew in such a matter, were it not that in St Stephen's speech, in the Acts of the Apostles, vii, 14, the number 75 is repeated, and an awkward dilemma is created, from which it is impossible to extricate ourselves, if these conflicting accounts, both written by inspiration, are to be considered as having come down to us in their original state. This may with justice be called in question; for Dean Shuckford, who supposes that the transcribers have added something in chapter xxxv, accuses them of having omitted something in chapter xlv, of having added a verse in xlv, 27, of the Septuagint, which is more full than the Hebrew, and lastly of having altered 70 into 75 in chapter vii of the Acts. It is difficult to imagine how a book, with which such liberties have been taken, can properly be regarded as an immaculate record. But the same mode of interpretation is entirely inapplicable to explain the remarkable fact that among those who accompanied Jacob into Egypt, are enumerated, in Gen. xlv, 21, ten sons of Benjamin, and, in v. 12, two grandsons of Judah, Hezron and Hamul. Jacob surely went into Egypt soon after the famine began, and Benjamin was then a lad, if we may trust the chronologers, under twenty years of age. The grandsons of Judah, through his son Pharez,



could not have been born until many years later; for Pharez their father was only two or three years old, when the whole family first entered the land of their servitude.

6. *Excessive accounts of the population of the Holy Land.*

In II SAMUEL chap. xxiv, verse 9, we meet with the astonishing assertion that the number of soldiers in David's army was one million three hundred thousand men;

And Joab gave up the sum of the number of the people unto the king: and there were in Israel eight hundred thousand valiant men that drew the sword; and the men of Judah were five hundred thousand men.

If these numbers are correct, we must suppose that all the men in Israel and Judah capable of bearing arms, whether soldiers by profession or not, were included in the calculation. Now, computing those capable of bearing arms as one out of three—a very large proportion—it results that the whole number of males in Israel and Judah was nearly 4 millions. There would be in the next place, the same number of females of all ages, or rather the number of females would be greater, as is found to be the case in all countries. We may then conclude that the population of David's dominions amounted to at least 8 millions, a very large number indeed for so small a country as Judæa, which is in size hardly greater than Holland or Belgium, and yet these two kingdoms, though thickly peopled, contain, together, little more than half of the above mentioned estimate taken from the census of King David's dominions. Let us now compare with this the account given in I Chron. xxi, 5:

And Joab gave the sum of the number of the people unto David. And all they of Israel were a thousand thousand and an hundred thousand men that drew sword: and Judah was four hundred three score and ten thousand men that drew sword.

These numbers make a total of one million five hundred



and seventy thousand men, capable of bearing arms, and after the same rate, the population of the Holy Land, in the reign of David, amounted to nine millions four hundred and twenty thousand persons, which is even greater than the total, afforded by the account given in the book of Samuel.

*7. Error in the number of Solomon's officers.*

In I Kings ix, 23, we read :

These were the chief of the officers that were over Solomon's work, five hundred and fifty, which bare rule over the people that wrought in the work.

The number of officers is very different in II Chron. viii, 10 ;

And these were the chief of king Solomon's officers, even two hundred and fifty, that bare rule over the people.

The explanation which Bishop Patrick gives of this discrepancy, in a note on I Kings ix, 23, is simply a conjecture, founded on no fact or reason whatever :

At 2 Chron. viii, 10 the number is stated at 250. The most probable solution is that there were 250 set over those who wrought in the temple ; and the rest had the superintendence of public works in other places.

Numbers, when expressed by short ideagraphic signs, such as Arabian or Roman numerals, are always liable to corruption : but the care taken by the Jews to preserve their scriptures from error, renders it unlikely that these scriptures should have been corrupted like other books. Yet we find so many disagreements in numbers between Kings and Chronicles, that it is necessary to assign some reason for the fact. One general explanation may be given of all these discrepancies. The separate documents differed originally because they proceeded from different authors who wrote independently, one of the other, and like all

historians, differed from each other in the minor details of their histories. The compilers who collected those records retained the narratives in their original form, and with all these inaccuracies uncorrected.

### 8. *Error in the number of talents brought from Ophir.*

In I Kings ix, 28, it is said that the ships built by King Solomon

came to Ophir, and fetched from thence gold, four hundred and twenty talents, and brought it to king Solomon.

Bishop Patrick writes the following note on this verse :

It is said at II Chron. viii, 18, that they brought 450 talents : a difference which is of little importance, whether we attribute it to a variation in the value of the talent, or in the quantity of the metal, the one referring to the quantity of pure gold, the other of gold with alloy ; or whether we suppose 450 talents to be the gross produce of the voyage, 420 the produce with the deduction of expenses.

Such annotations as these are unworthy the importance of the subject, and the positive nature of the statements. The difference of thirty talents is decided : it arose, no doubt, from an inaccuracy in the ancient records, and this inaccuracy has been perpetuated by the compiler, who valued and preserved the genuineness of his materials, even though they were slightly discrepant the one with the other.

### 9. *Concerning the situation of Tarshish.*

The passages of the Old Testament, in which Tarshish is named, involve a doubt whether that city was situated on the Red Sea or the Mediterranean :

I KINGS x, 22. For the king [Solomon] had at sea a navy at Tharshish with the navy of Hiram : once in three years came the navy of Tharshish, bringing gold and silver, ivory, apes and peacocks.

The Tyrians certainly had their navy in the Mediterranean, and not on the Red Sea, from which they were separated by the Israelites, the Philistines, and other tribes.

I KINGS xxii, 48. Jehoshaphat made ships of Tharshish to go to

Ophir for gold: but they went not; for the ships were broken at Ezion-geber.

Now Ezion-geber was a port on the Red Sea, and, if we might judge from this verse alone, the city of Tharshish was situated there also. This is confirmed by the parallel passage in II Chronicles, xx, 36—37:

And he [*Jehoshaphat*] joined himself with him [*Ahaziah*] to make ships to go to Tarshish; and they made the ships at Ezion-geber. Then Eliezer the son of Dodavah of Mareshah prophesied against Jehoshaphat, saying, "Because thou hast joined thyself with Ahaziah, the Lord hath broken thy works." And the ships were broken, that they were not able to go to Tarshish.

10. *The Law of Moses not observed by the Israelites.*

It is difficult to imagine that the Law of Moses, as we now have it, could have been in public and active operation during the times of the Hebrew commonwealth and monarchy; for in the history of the kings we find the most flagrant breaches of that law without any marks of censure from the writer, who, as far as we learn by his narrative, appears to have known little more than the name of Moses or of his Laws.

Thus, in DEUTERONOMY xvii, 14—28, a passage which, according to the theory now proposed, was written after the case, which is there put, had been realized, we find the following:

When thou art come unto the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee and shalt possess it, and shalt dwell therein, and shalt say, I will set a king over me, like as all the nations that are about me; thou shalt in any wise set him king over thee, whom the Lord thy God shall choose: one from among thy brethren shalt thou set king over thee: thou mayst not set a stranger over thee, which is not thy brother.

But he shall not multiply horses to himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt, to the end that he should multiply horses: forasmuch as the Lord hath said unto you, Ye shall henceforth return no more that way.

Neither shall he multiply wives to himself that his heart turn not



away : neither shall he greatly multiply to himself silver and gold.

And it shall be, when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book out of that which is before the priests the Levites : and it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life : that he may learn to fear the Lord his God, to keep all the words of this law and these statutes, to do them : that his heart be not lifted up above his brethren, and that he turn not aside from the commandment, to the right hand or to the left : to the end that he may prolong his days in his kingdom, he, and his children, in the midst of Israel.

Such were the commands of Moses on three specific points : 1. Horses, 2. Wives, and 3. Copying out the Law. The following texts shew how Solomon obeyed these commands :

1 KINGS iv, 26. And Solomon had forty thousand stalls of horses for his chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen.

— xi, 3, And he [*Solomon*] had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines : and his wives turned away his heart.

The writer of this history censures, it is true, the multiplication of wives, but he does not point out the flagrant breach of the Law which Solomon committed ; and as regards the copying of the Law, he observes a deep and total silence upon the subject.

11. *Inconsistency between Samuel's picture of a king and that ascribed to Moses in Deut. xvii.*

The description of a king, just cited from Deuteronomy xvii, 16—20, presents nothing offensive to the feelings, or injurious to the happiness of the people : nor does it seem to imply that the Almighty would disapprove of the Israelites choosing for themselves a king when they should be settled in the land of promise. On the contrary it conveys an idea that the request would be a natural one, and it explains the mode in which the petition should be complied with. Is it then likely that Samuel had read this description when he cautioned the people against choosing



a king, by giving the following picture of his tyranny and his rapacity ?

I SAM. viii, 11—18. This will be the manner of the king that shall reign over you : he will take your sons, and appoint them for himself, for his chariots, and to be his horsemen ; and some shall run before his chariots.

And he will appoint him captains over thousands, and captains over fifties, and will set them to ear his ground, and to reap his harvest, and to make his instruments of war, and instruments of his chariots. And he will take your daughters to be confectionaries, and to be cooks, and to be bakers. And he will take your fields, and your vineyards, and your olive-yards, even the best of them, and give them to his servants. And he will take the tenth of your seed, and of your vineyards, and give to his officers, and to his servants. And he will take your menservants, and your maid-servants, and your goodliest young men, and your asses, and put them to his work.

He will take the tenth of your sheep ; and ye shall be his servants.

And ye shall cry out in that day because of your king which ye shall have chosen you ; and the Lord will not hear you in that day.

These words of Samuel will seem highly reasonable, to those who know the nature of oriental despotism, if we only suppose that Samuel had never read the 17th chapter of Deuteronomy, which deals so much more leniently with the same contingency.

It is something also to our present point that neither does Samuel cause Saul to copy out the book of the Law, as before alluded to, and this seems to prove that there was no book of the Law, besides the two tables of stone, then in existence.

There are many other inaccuracies and contradictions in the Old Testament, which prove that the books are not contemporary with the events which they describe. Those which have been enumerated may suffice ; the reader who wishes to examine the others for himself will have no difficulty in finding them out, particularly the following :

In I Chron. iii, 16, Zedekiah, who was Mattaniah, is

called the son of Jehoiachin, but in II Kings xxiv, 17, he is stated to have been his uncle.

In I Kings xxiv, 8, Jehoiachin is said to have been 18 years old when he began to reign, but in II Chron. xxxvi, 9, his age is stated to have been 8 only.

In Ezra ii, 64, is a wrong total, being considerably more than the several items before enumerated amount to.

The chronology of sovereigns given in the books of Kings will also be found in many instances so contradictory to that given in Chronicles, that it is impossible to harmonize them, and a forcible impression is left upon the mind that both may be wrong, because neither is contemporary.

## CHAPTER 21.

### REFERENCES TO FACTS OF WHICH NO RECORDS SURVIVE.

It is worthy of observation that in some of the later books of the Old and New Testaments we find allusion made to events said to have happened in former times, of which no trace can be found in the earlier books, where we should expect them to be mentioned. A few examples of this peculiarity will make the subject sufficiently intelligible.

#### 1.

GEN. xii, 1. Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee &c....So Abram departed, as the Lord had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran.

Bishop Patrick remarks on the words *Now the Lord had said unto Abram*, that this happened “before he came to Haran, and while he lived in Ur of the Chaldees.” But this could not have been so ; for in chapter xi, 31, we read :

And Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran, his son’s son, and Sarai his daughter in law, his son Abram’s wife, and they went forth with them from Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan ; and they came to Haran, and dwelt there.

Thus it appears that it was Abraham’s father Terah, and not Abraham, who led the family out from Ur of the Chaldees ; and that too, with the intention of entering the land of Canaan. Abraham only continued the migration which his father had begun. The account of this transaction is noticed in the book of Judith, in terms which seem to shew that there were once more full accounts which are now lost.

JUDITH v, 6—8. This people are descended of the Chaldæans : and they sojourned heretofore in Mesopotamia, because they would not follow the gods of their fathers, which were in the land of Chaldæa. For they left the way of their ancestors, and worshipped the God of heaven, the God whom they knew : so they cast them out from the face of their gods, and they fled into Mesopotamia, and sojourned there many days.

## 2.

In I Samuel, xii, 11, we read :

And the Lord sent Jerubbael, and Bedan, and Jephthah, and Samuel, and delivered you out of the hand of your enemies on every side, and ye dwelled safe.

“It is remarkable,” says Bishop Patrick,

that there is no such name as Bedan mentioned in the book of Judges.

Dr Hales, with a singular boldness of criticism, observes on the same passage :

Perhaps Barak may be meant.



This supposition might pass, if it were certain that the book of Judges contained a full history of all that period of the Jewish national existence, but, as it certainly is a very brief history, and occasionally changes with great abruptness from one subject to another, it is most probable that other writings once existed, which perished before the present book of Judges was compiled.

## 3.

A similar mode of interpretation may be applied to a passage of Nehemiah ix, 16, as compared with Numbers xiv, 4.

NEHEMIAH ix, 16. But they and our fathers dealt proudly, and hardened their necks, and hearkened not to thy commandments. And refused to obey, neither were mindful of thy wonders that thou didst among them; but hardened their necks, and in their rebellion appointed a captain to return to their bondage &c.

In Numbers xiv, 4, we are told :

And they said one to another, Let us make a captain, and let us return into Egypt.

But it is not stated that the people actually chose a captain to lead them back into Egypt. The alternative is evidently this : Nehemiah either quotes erroneously from the book of Numbers, or he had a more full account of the matter to which he referred, than has been handed down to us.

## 4.

Again; in St Paul's epistle to the Hebrews, ix, 19, we read thus :

For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book and all the people.

The writer of this epistle must also have had more sources of information than we now possess: for the account which he gives in the verse before us does not



exactly tally with any of the various verses in the Levitical Law, where the subject is related. Nothing is said of the 'book' being sprinkled with the blood, even if the other parts of the description are allowed to bear a sufficient resemblance.

## 5.

Another remarkable instance, bearing upon my present argument, is the account which St Jude gives of a contest between Michael and the Devil :

Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the Devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, "The Lord rebuke thee !"

It is not known to what St Jude alludes in this verse : nothing is said, in the Old Testament, of any contest between the Devil and the archangel Michael, and the remark, which is quoted from Dr Hales in the Family Bible, on Deuteronomy xxxiv, 10, rather embarrasses than clears up the subject :

From an obscure passage in the New Testament, in which "Michael the archangel is said to have contended with the devil, about the body of Moses," Jude 9, we may collect, that he was buried by the ministry of angels, near the scene of the idolatry of the Israelites ; but that the spot was purposely concealed, lest his tomb might also be converted into an object of idolatrous worship among the Israelites, like the brazen serpent.

It is dangerous to hazard such a conjecture, because it leads to the inference that a man admitted to such intimate converse with God, should, after death, run the risk of being carried away by the Devil, and only rescued by the interposition of an archangel. It is better to leave the passage of St Jude in its original obscurity, than attempt to solve it by compromising the power and goodness of the Almighty. St Jude probably had other writings to refer to, which recorded the contest between the powers of good and evil, but are now lost.

## 6.

In St Paul's Second epistle to Timothy, ch. iii, v. 8, are found the names of two of the magicians who competed with Moses in magical arts, in the presence of Pharaoh, king of Egypt.

Now, as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth : men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith.

Note :

*Jannes and Jambres*] These names are not to be met with in the Old Testament, but are here taken out of other records of the Jews, as divers other things mentioned in the New Testament : see Acts vii, 22, 23, 25 : they are questionless the names of Pharaoh's chief magicians, spoken of in Exod. vii. *Dr Hammond*. It is remarkable that the former of these is mentioned together with Moses, by Pliny; and both of them by Numenius the philosopher, quoted in Eusebius, as celebrated magicians. *Dr Doddridge*.

It is presumed that the names 'Jannes' and 'Jambres,' not found in the books of Moses, became known to St Paul through the medium of other writings in which many particulars of Jewish history were recorded, but now no longer in existence.

## 7.

Several circumstances of the life and acts of Moses are known to us only because they are noticed in the New Testament, no mention being made of them in the old Jewish Scriptures. For instance, in Acts vii, vv. 22, &c. referred to above by Dr Hammond, we are told that

Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds. And, when he was full forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brethren the children of Israel &c.

But in the book of Exodus the account of these things is much shorter, and nothing is said of the age of Moses, at the time referred to.

Neither is there any authority in the Pentateuch for the remark, which occurs in Hebrews xi, 24.

By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter.

These circumstances make it probable that there were other original records in the time of St Paul, which have since perished.

This conclusion is supported by the admitted fact that many books, which have perished, are quoted in the Old Testament itself. Such are the books of Jasher, Enoch, the Wars of the Lord and many others. See page 25.

A perplexing train of argument opens to us from a consideration of these facts. If the books, which have perished, were of value, why have they perished? if they were of no value, why have valuable writers like St Paul, quoted them? It is supposed that they were of inferior authority, but this point has not been proved. If the existing books are genuine relics of a high antiquity, yet some of the lost books were more ancient still. The same Providence which has preserved the ones, has suffered the others to sink, even though those which have floated down the stream of time are imperfect on many points which the others would have supplied. I think these observations coincide with the opinion which has been advanced, that both are copied from more ancient sources.



## CHAPTER 22.

GRAMMATICAL SUBTLETIES ARE A PROOF OF A LATER AGE.

Those who have studied the ancient history and literature of Greece and Rome, have observed that, when those countries began to exhibit signs of decay, the style of their writers began to decline and to exhibit certain symptoms of decrepitude and bad taste. In this particular, mind seems to be subject to the same law as the physical universe, for it blooms or withers in proportion to the favorable or adverse circumstances of its position. No one will venture to compare the grammatical and verbal subtleties which were introduced in later ages into the Greek poetry, with the noble simplicity of Homer, Æschylus or Pindar. A few instances of the bad taste, which always marks a degenerate age, may here be of use to those who have not time to read the Classics for themselves.

About the year 200 before Christ lived one Simmias, a native of Rhodes, who is generally considered the inventor of the style of versification to which I refer, for it does not appear to have existed before his time, and, indeed, it could hardly have been conceived except in an age, when the public taste had become exceedingly corrupt: it consists in arranging verses in such a way, as to form figures of various objects. Six such poems have been preserved, forming an axe, a pair of wings, two altars, an egg, and a pan-pipe. The last of these is sometimes ascribed to Theocritus, but, no doubt, erroneously: it consisted of twenty verses, arranged in ten pairs, each pair of the same length, but shorter than the preceding pair; the whole representing ten pipes, each shorter than the other.

The Latin poets indulged abundantly in conceits of this kind. The poet Ausonius was not free from the infection.



Among his Idyllia is a poem so constructed that the last word of every line is the first word of the following line. In our own country Venerable Bede improved upon this thought, and wrote an elegy, in such a manner, that the last half of each verse was the first half of the next verse. Ausonius also wrote poems in which every line ended with monosyllables, denoting the members of the body, the names of Gods, of the virtues, the letters of the alphabet, &c. &c. But Ausonius belonged to a declining age and is never placed on the same level in the list of poets with Virgil, Horace, or Juvenal.

These facts have their parallel in the Hebrew writings: Thus in the 3rd chapter of Zephaniah, verse 8, \* are found all the letters of the Hebrew alphabet, together with the vowel points, and almost all the grammatical marks invented to facilitate the reading of the Hebrew language. It can hardly be supposed that this curious circumstance was the result of accident; and that *not quite all* the grammatical marks are found there, seems to imply that those which do not occur, have been invented since.

There are several other instances of this play on letters in the Old Testament. Its grand division into 22 books, corresponding to the number of letters in the alphabet, is the most striking, and it is notorious that the 119th psalm is divided into 22 parts, designated by the names of the letters, *aleph, beth, gimel, dalet* &c.

The twenty-fifth psalm contains 22 verses, each of which begins with a different letter of the alphabet, from *aleph* to *tau*.

Psalm xxxiv contains 22 verses, besides the title *A psalm of David* &c. Each verse begins with a fresh letter; but *vau* is omitted, and to fill up the number the last verse begins with *pe*.

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\* See Lee's Hebrew Grammar, page 31.

Several other psalms are constructed on similar principles; for instance Ps. xxxvii, cxi, cxii, and cxlv: but in Ps. cxlv one letter  $\square$  is omitted; in Ps. xxxvii,  $\text{ז}$  is repeated and  $\text{י}$  is omitted. This kind of composition is found also in Proverbs, where the last 22 verses of the thirty first chapter are also alphabetic; and still more remarkably in the first four chapters of the Lamentations of Jeremiah, where two, and sometimes three verses together begin all with the same letter.

This species of writing occurs, therefore, in four books of the Old Testament, Psalms, Proverbs, the Prophecy of Zephaniah, and the Lamentations of Jeremiah. In such late poets as the last two who are supposed to have flourished about the year 600 before Christ, (see page 8) this metrical conceit is less remarkable; but in the Psalms and Proverbs, the works of David and Solomon, who are represented as first-rate poets,—the former called the “sweet psalmist of Israel”—we cannot believe that such puerile absurdities could be found. It will, possibly, be replied, that some of the Psalms were not written by David, and that some of the Proverbs were not written by Solomon; but it is worthy of notice that the 25th and 34th psalms, in which these alphabetic fancies occur, are superscribed “A psalm of David.” We must, then, infer, either that the psalms in question were not written by David, or that the reputation of David as a poet was not so great as has been represented. But the consent of the whole Israelitish nation has awarded to David the same honours in Israel, which Homer enjoyed among the Greeks, Tasso in Italy, Aldhelm among the Anglo-Saxons, Taliessin in Wales, Ossian in Scotland, and many other bards, in different countries, whose songs have inspired their country men to deeds of valour in the field and of conviviality at the banquet. These psalms, therefore, were not composed by David, but rather by some imitator in a later age, when the glories of past

times had faded, and the increased facilities, which about the 5th and 6th centuries before Christ were opened by the more general use of writing, led to the composition of many pieces both in prose and verse, which were afterwards ascribed to the great masters of the heroic ages.

If it should be urged that the works, in which these devices occur, are not historical books, and therefore ought not to be adduced here, the reply is obvious. Although not strictly historical, yet they bear with great force upon the present inquiry. If the Psalms and Proverbs were not written till a later age,—ascribed as they are to King David and Solomon,—the historical books, into which some of these psalms are interwoven, must, a fortiori, be later still. Besides which such pedantic forms of writing, whether found in prose or verse, always imply a degenerate age; and, as it is not likely that they should frequently occur in prose, we are compelled to have recourse for them to the poetical books, on account of the valuable inferences which they furnish.

## CHAPTER 23.

THAT THE ISRAELITES SPOKE EGYPTIAN IN EGYPT, AND ONLY ACQUIRED THE HEBREW OR CANAANITISH LANGUAGE BY A LONG RESIDENCE IN CANAAN.

That any living language, whatsoever, should have remained in the same state, from the creation to the time of Moses, is a thing in itself of the utmost improbability .....

I find this remark in the Celtic Researches, page 91, and as the learned author proceeds in a train of thought which is closely in harmony with my present line of argument, I continue to quote those passages which are most applicable, omitting others which do not so immediately concern the subject.—

*But we have been accustomed to regard the Hebrew as a sacred, and consequently, as an incorruptible language.*

That sacredness of character, which this language really possesses, must have been derived purely from the circumstance of its having been the vehicle of divine communication. Before it became the language of prophecy, and of the law, I can conceive of no inherent stamp of sacredness, with which it could have been distinguished. What idea can we form of this language being sacred *per se*? It had not, surely, been the language of angels before the formation of man. It was nothing more than a medium for the expression of human ideas and perceptions, and for communicating information to human intellects. And why should one human language be in itself more sacred than another? Why should the primitive language, in this respect, be placed before the most modern?

These observations cannot be disputed: we may examine the language of the Old Testament in the same manner as any other ancient or modern language, and test it by all the various modes which criticism can supply. When therefore we find that the Hebrew nation, which comes into contact with Europeans for the first time in the



age of Alexander the Great, about 300 years before Christ, claim for their sacred books an antiquity of 1200 years precedent to that date, it becomes necessary to enquire how far the mutability of all human languages is consistent with such claims.

On the authority of the Old Testament itself, it appears that the Hebrews derive their name from their ancestor Heber, one of whose descendants, Abraham, left his native country Chaldæa, and settled in the land of Canaan. Now

We have a complete demonstration, Gen. xxxi, 47,\* that the great stock of the family of Heber, which remained in Mesopotamia, spoke the Chaldaic and not the Hebrew dialect.

Laban, who had been brought up in the house of his fathers, denominates the heap of witness, certainly in his native tongue, Jegar Saha-dutha, יגרשהדוּתָא. This name is evidently composed of three Chaldaic words, יגר A heap, שדה A witness, and רת or דיתא An appointment. Had Moses literally transcribed all the words of Laban, he could not have furnished us with a more satisfactory proof of the language he used.

Jacob, on the other hand, who had been born in a foreign country and had lived there from his infancy, till he was upwards of seventy years of age, describes the same heap in a language different from that of his relations. He calls it גלעד, using two Hebrew terms, one of which implies a *heap* and the other a *witness* or testimony. The name is synonymously recorded in both languages, and, therefore, undoubtedly in the languages which Laban and Jacob respectively used. The Hebrew was not then the general dialect of the children of Heber.

And it is equally clear that it was not peculiar to his family. The prophet Isaiah, chap. xix, emphatically calls it the *language of Canaan*.†

\* And Jacob said unto his brethen, Gather stones : and they took stones, and made an heap , and they did eat there upon the heap. And Laban called it Jegar-sahadutha, but Jacob called it Galeed; GEN. xxxi, 46. 47. Bishop Patrick says, "The one is a Syriac, the other a Hebrew name, both having the same signification." Syriac and Chaldaic may be considered as the same language.

† In that day shall five cities in the land of Egypt speak the language of Canaan, and swear to the Lord of hosts ; one shall be called The city of destruction. ISAIAH xix, 18.

In addition to this sacred testimony, we have the names of men and places amongst the old Canaanites, in the time of Abraham, in pure Hebrew. We have Phœnician inscriptions, the fragment of the Punic language in the *Pænulus* of Plautus, and the remains of that language in the island of Malta, as undeniable proofs, that the Hebrew was the genuine language of the house of Canaan, which preserved it with little variation to a late age.

This language could by no means have been communicated by Abraham to the natives of the country. It is certain that he found it, and very probable that he learnt it there. In his conversation with the inhabitants, he must have used their language. It is easy and natural for a stranger to acquire the language of the people amongst whom he settles, especially if it differs from his own only as a dialect. But it is an absolute impossibility for several independent kingdoms suddenly to accommodate themselves to the dialect of a single sojourner: and the language of the old Canaanites, and of the posterity of Abraham, at least, the house of Jacob, was the same.

The native tongue of Abraham must have been that which was spoken by his family, in Chaldæa and Mesopotamia.—The former name of this very patriarch seems to be referable to the Chaldaic רמא or רמה, *to be dejected* or *cast down*, rather than to the Hebrew רם, *Exalted*, *Lofty*.

He had been born in the declining years of his father. His lot was only that of a younger son. His own wife was barren, and he had long been *cast down*, as to the hope of a progeny. He consequently seems to have been regarded in his native country as a *dry branch*. No separate patrimony had been assigned to him. His residence was in a city which had received the name of his brother Haran. This must have been an afflicting circumstance, in an age when the sons regularly shared the paternal estate, and became the heads of families, and the chiefs of the little cities: and it seems to have weighed heavy upon Abraham's heart. "Lord God," says he, "what wilt thou give *me*, seeing I go childless!—Behold, *to me thou hast given no seed*, and lo, one born in mine house is mine heir." He had hoped to become the father of a family; but from that hope he was *cast down*. To the mortifying epithet which reminded him of his affliction, his new Hebrew name, *A father of Multitudes*, which was conferred upon him several years after he had been in the land of Canaan, must have presented a very pleasing contrast. To the title of *Exalted father*, it would have been no contrast at all.

Thus, then, Laban who had always lived in the land of Chaldæa, naturally spoke the language of his kindred and nation, whilst Jacob, who had been educated in the land of Canaan, as naturally spoke the language of that country. It is a popular error to suppose that Jacob was a young man, when he fled to his cousin Laban, that he might escape from his brother Esau. He was, in fact, nearly a hundred years old, as may be seen by comparing the dates, given in the margins of our Bibles; and consequently the language of Canaan, i. e. the Hebrew language, would be familiar to his ear. His father Isaac, and his grandfather Abraham, had been settled nearly two hundred years in the land which their posterity afterwards occupied.

Jacob, after parting from Laban, would naturally resume the use of his paternal language, and all his family and tribe would learn it also. Otherwise he could not have associated with the people of Canaan, in the manner described in the Bible, where no mention is made of an interpreter to intervene between them. But we need not suppose that his family lost the use of the Chaldaic, for Jacob had lived about 20 years in Chaldæa,

where he married Chaldean or Aramæan wives [*Rachel, Leah, and their two handmaids*] and here his children were born and partly educated. These children could have heard the Hebrew only from their father's mouth, even if we suppose that he used it in conversing with them. Their *mother* tongue was the Chaldaic, the same which was spoken in the family of their grandfather Laban. Jacob, with his household, again returned into the land of Canaan. Here the young men married wives who spoke the Canaanitish language. So that, when the whole family went down into Egypt, about 33 years after their return from Mesopotamia, they must have carried with them both the Chaldaic language and that of Canaan.

But, as the latter was the dialect most familiar to Jacob himself, and perhaps the only dialect of the younger and more numerous branches, it prevailed over the other &c.

If this argument should be thought to rest too much on



*probability*, with no other *fact* to support it than the diversity of name, which Laban and Jacob give to the same pillar,—confessedly two names taken from different languages or dialects,—yet we now come to an ascertained fact, which leads to an inference of much importance to our argument. When the sons of Jacob first went down to Egypt to buy corn, the services of an interpreter were required to enable them to transact their business. It is clear, therefore, that the language of the Egyptians and the Hebrews were different, the one from the other. But, when Jacob went to dwell in Egypt, his tribe consisted of sixty-six persons only, and as from this time to the Exodus, a period of more than 400 years,\* they continued to reside in Egypt, it becomes almost a physical certainty that they lost the use of their native tongue, Hebrew, and adopted that of the people, among whom they dwelt.

There is an important passage in the book of Nehemiah, shewing how soon a language is lost when a small number of persons fix themselves for permanent residence in a strange country.

In those days also saw I [i. e. Nehemiah] Jews that had married wives of Ashdod, of Ammon, and of Moab. And their children spake half in the speech of Ashdod, and could not speak in the Jews' language, but according to the language of each people. NEHEMIAH xiii, 23, 24.

Let us see what facts may be brought forward from the books of Genesis and Exodus, in support of the assertion, above made, that the Israelites in Egypt exchanged their native language for that of the Egyptians.

We read that, when the Hebrews arrived in Egypt, they came into the land of Goshen, the province of Egypt, which travellers, coming from Canaan by the usual

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\* See page 148, where it is proved that there is no authority for reducing the length of the Egyptian residence from 430 to 215 years.



route, ordinarily arrive at. The narrative continues, GEN. xlv, 31—34.

And Joseph said unto his brethren, and unto his father's house, "I will go up, and shew Pharaoh, and say unto him, 'My brethren, and my father's house, which *were* in the land of Canaan, are come unto me; and the men are shepherds, for their trade hath been to feed cattle; and they have brought their flocks, and their herds, and all that they have.' And it shall come to pass, when Pharaoh shall call you, and shall say 'What is your occupation?' that ye shall say, 'Thy servants' trade hath been about cattle from our youth up even until now, both we *and* also our fathers:' that ye may dwell in the land of Goshen;" for every shepherd is an abomination to the Egyptians.

In pursuance of this plan, Joseph prepares Pharaoh for the reception of Jacob, who afterwards has an interview with the king.

And Joseph placed his father and his brethren, and gave them a possession in the land of Egypt, in the best of the land of Rameses, as Pharaoh had commanded. GEN. xlvii, 11.

We read, at verse 27 of the same chapter :

And Israel dwelt in the land of Egypt, in the country of Goshen; and they had possessions therein, and grew and multiplied exceedingly.

It has been argued, on the strength of this separate residence of the Hebrews in Egypt, that they still retained the use of their native language. I quote from the Celtic Researches, p. 100 :

During the former part of the two centuries that the Israelites remained in Egypt, they were appointed a residence and establishment, separate from the inhabitants of the country. In this time their tribes became numerous. They expanded from a family into a nation. Their language obtained the stability of a national language, and from henceforth they preserved it with considerable purity.

But he who writes thus, almost retracts in the next sentence what he has so written.

But the condition to which they were at last reduced, must have

rendered it almost impossible for them to preserve it absolutely immaculate. New habits of life and new occupations must have introduced new ideas, and demanded new terms, and those which were already current amongst the Egyptians would, in general, be employed on such occasions.

If it can be proved that so small a number of persons as sixty-six, all of one family, ever yet in the history of the world, remained more than 400 or even 200 years in the midst of a large, dense and highly civilized people, as the Egyptians then were, without adopting the language of that country instead of their own, then may we admit that the Hebrews spoke, at the Exode, precisely the same language which they carried with them into Egypt. But there are several facts which militate against this inference.

We have seen that, of the family of Jacob, some were Canaanitish Hebrews by birth, others Chaldaic Hebrews, and that they spoke different dialects. There was, then, a struggle between these rival dialects, which would very much smooth the way for the extinction of both by the obvious mode of adopting a third, which would be of greater use, and in fact essential to them, in the country, where they were come to reside.

But even before Jacob came into Egypt, this change of language was already beginning.

In Genesis, chap. xlviii, verse 5, we read that Jacob says to Joseph his son :

And now thy two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, which were born unto thee in the land of Egypt before I came unto thee into Egypt, *are mine*; as Reuben and Simeon they shall be mine.

What language, it may be asked, were these children taught to speak ? Their mother was an Egyptian lady, and we read of their birth in Genesis xli, 50.

And unto Joseph were born two sons BEFORE THE YEARS OF FAMINE CAME, which Asenath the daughter of Poti-pherah priest of On bare unto him.

It was in the third year of the famine (Gen. xlv, 6), that Jacob and his family entered Egypt : so that the two children were at least 3 or 4 years old, when their grandfather settled in Egypt. It is natural to suppose that they spoke the Egyptian language, and had no sufficient reason for learning the Hebrew tongue at all. Their father was well acquainted with Egyptian, and in fact used it continually in discharging his duties as prime minister of Pharaoh. These offices he continued to discharge until his death, and therefore, he was continually in the habit of speaking the Egyptian language, which, by a law of nature, became the language of his children after him. Of this natural law there are exemplifications in the world at present. It is well known that there are many consuls, ambassadors and others, in England and elsewhere, whose families have completely adopted the language of the people among whom they dwell. The English chaplain at Brussels has a large family of children, some of whom cannot speak English, although there are several thousand English residents in that city. There is also in France a clergyman, now or lately occupying a high post in the office of Censorship of Ecclesiastical books printed in the diocese of Paris, who, though an Irishman by birth, has almost lost the use of his native tongue in consequence of his long residence in Paris.

But it is said that the Israelites resided in the land of Goshen, separate from the native inhabitants. It must first be observed that we know nothing about the land of Goshen, save this fact, that the Israelites were placed to dwell in it. What, therefore, may have been the peculiar circumstances which caused it to be selected, we can only conjecture. But it is of no importance to our present enquiry. For it is quite certain that they were not alone in the land of Goshen, and did not live there during the whole of their residence in Egypt. Moses, who led them out of



Egypt, was eighty years old at the time of the Exodus, and before his birth, his countrymen having been made slaves certainly did not occupy the land of Goshen all to themselves. The circumstances related of the birth of Moses shew plainly that the Hebrews in Egypt were in a state of bondage under the task-masters of Pharaoh. It is probable that they had been in this state many years, ever since the death of Joseph ; for we read in Exodus, i, 8 :

Now there arose up a new king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph.

Joseph is supposed to have died about 1635 before Christ, at least this is the date marked in the margin of our bibles. As the same system of chronology places the Exode in 1495 before Christ, it appears that the Hebrews remained in Egypt 140 years after the death of Joseph, and sixty years before the birth of Moses.\* During by far the greater portion of this time, perhaps all of it, they were in a state of grinding slavery, reduced to the occupation of brick-making, and other hard service, as we read in Exodus i, 13 :

And the Egyptians made the children of Israel to serve with rigour : and they made their lives bitter with hard bondage, in mortar, and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field : all their service, wherein they made them serve, was with rigour.

Neither can it be said that the Hebrews abstained from intermarrying with the natives during their residence in Egypt ; for we read in Leviticus xxiv, 10 :

And the son of an Israelitish woman, WHOSE FATHER WAS AN EGYPTIAN, went out among the children of Israel : and this son of the Israelitish woman and a man of Israel strove together in the camp.

Is it possible that in this condition the Israelites should

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\* This is the most favourable calculation, admitting that the slavery in Egypt lasted only 215 years. See page 148.



have retained the use of the same language, which their ancestor Jacob spoke a hundred years before when he came into Egypt, but which even Jacob's own children did not speak as their mother tongue, because his wives were Chaldean women, and nearly all his children were by birth Chaldeans also ?

The effects which slavery will produce may still be seen in the West Indies and America, where millions of slaves now exist, all speaking the language which they have learnt since their captivity began. In the English settlements some of these slaves speak a broken English, others have formed a base and ignominious dialect, which an Englishman could not understand, and so different from the language of the blacks in other parts of the settlement that it was thought necessary, or advisable, a few years ago, to translate the Bible expressly for their use. In none of the American settlements have the blacks retained the language which they carried with them from Africa, except that a few words and names have been here and there preserved, in consequence of peculiar circumstances, which need not at present occupy our attention.

And yet, be it remembered, the colonies of black slaves in America have been yearly augmented by fresh importations from Africa, consisting, each year, of as many individuals as went out of Egypt at the time of the Exode. It may then be fairly inferred that the Israelites lost the use of their original language during the space of more than 200—if not 400—years that they resided in Egypt.

Let us, however, enquire into the early history of Moses himself. It is unnecessary to repeat the story of his being placed in the ark of bulrushes and found by Pharaoh's daughter. But the mode in which he was brought up is deserving of notice. The mother of Moses was, by a device of his sister, introduced to be his nurse.

And the child grew, and she brought him unto Pharaoh's daughter,

and he became her son. And she [*Pharaoh's daughter*] called his name Moses : and she said, " Because I drew him out of the water." Ex. ii, 10.

In Mant and D'oily's Family Bible is the following note to the word Moses :

" Which in the *Egyptian* language signifies one saved or drawn out of the water. *Mo* or *Mou* was the Egyptian for water. *Calmet, Bryant.*"

Thus, then, the young child Moses, was bred up in the house of Pharaoh's daughter, who assumed the charge of his education, gave him an *Egyptian* \* name, and adopted him for her son. Is it not, then, a moral, nay, a physical, certainty, that he learnt Egyptian for his mother tongue ? Is it likely that a princess would have bred up a foundling to speak any other language than her own ? Is it not a more obvious explanation of these difficulties to assert that the Egyptians and the Hebrews spoke at this time the same language—the language which prevailed at that time in the land of Egypt, where the one people acted as imperious masters, the other were treated as vile and ignominious slaves ?

When, therefore, the Israelites, escaping from this tyranny, found themselves once more in the open wilderness of Arabia, where their forefathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob roamed as independent chiefs, among other kindred Arab tribes, they carried with them the dialect, not of Canaan, but of Egypt. And it must not be forgotten that from the nature of their servitude in Egypt, there were, probably, very few men of literary acquirements among them. The circumstances of the case do not admit of any other inference : they were a nation of slaves, and their slavery had been peculiarly severe. We have no record

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\* Dr Lee says it is doubtful whether the word is Egyptian or Hebrew.

" Moses (מֹשֶׁה) is so called on account of his having been taken out of the water, as the text shews, whether the word itself be Egyptian or Hebrew, for, on this subject learned men differ. H. GRAM. art. 178, 2. 3. page 153.

of any one, in the whole number of the Jewish people, better than a slave, with the exception of Moses himself, who had been educated in all the learning of the Egyptians. But the new mode of life, into which they were thrown, would soon produce a corresponding change in the habits and character of the people. They dwelt no longer in houses of brick or stone, but in canvas tents, which at a moment's notice could be struck and transferred to another place. Their wealth consisted in their flocks and herds, and especially camels, those natives of the desert, which thrive the most where every other animal, without their aid, would starve. With the altered habits of the nation, their language, which was probably limited to a very narrow vocabulary—certainly much narrower than that of the Egyptians, from which it was in the most part taken—must have immediately begun to adapt itself to the situation in which they were placed, and at the end of the forty years, which elapsed before they crossed the Jordan, would, in all probability be much changed from what it was when they went forth from Egypt—changed, I mean, not in general principles but by the introduction of new terms to express the new objects which surrounded them and the new wants which they daily felt.

We must not suppose that the Israelites, during their passage through Arabia, were entirely secluded from the world, or held no intercourse with the other tribes, who roamed the desert like themselves. So far was this from being the case that Moses their leader had frequent cause to censure them for their proneness to associate, and even to form matrimonial alliances with other tribes. The following are the passages from the Pentateuch which allude to the intercourse between the Israelites and other tribes in the desert.

1. The Israelites fight with the tribe of the Amalekites in the Desert of Sin. Ex. xvii, 8.



2. Jethro and his family visit Moses in the Israelitish camp. Ex. xviii, 1. See afterwards NUMB. x, 29.

These events happened soon after the fifteenth day of the second month from the time of their leaving Egypt. See ch. xvi, 1.

3. NUMBERS xii, 1. And Miriam and Aaron spake against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married; for he had married an Ethiopian woman.

The country, to which the wife of Moses belonged, here called Ethiopia, is Cush in the original Hebrew, and may fairly be interpreted in a very wide sense. Ethiopia also, in Grecian history, designated not only the modern Ethiopia, but parts of Egypt, Arabia, and perhaps other neighbouring countries. We may then freely admit that the Ethiopian woman here mentioned was the same person elsewhere described as Jethro's daughter, but the manner in which her name is here introduced, is perfectly incompatible with her having been already described, and that so fully, in Exodus ii, as the daughter to the priest of Midian, and married to Moses, possibly several years before the strife which Miriam and Aaron now stirred up on her account. This leads to the following conclusion either that the two accounts of the wife of Moses were written by two distinct authors, or that the Ethiopian woman, whom Moses married, was not the same as the daughter of Jethro priest of Midian. In the former case, the whole Pentateuch, as it now is, cannot be considered as the work of Moses, in the latter case, the mixture of the Israelites with other tribes would appear to have begun very early after the Exodus, and to have been carried to a very great extreme.

4. Moses sends messengers to the king of Edom, for leave to pass through his territories. NUMB. xx, 14.

5. The Israelites are defeated by Arad king of the Canaanites. NUMB. xxi, 1.



6. The king of Sihon, having refused to allow the Israelites a free passage through his territories, is defeated. The result of this battle is remarkable.

Israel smote him with the edge of the sword, and possessed his land from Arnon unto Jabbok, even unto the children of Ammon: for the border of the children of Ammon was strong. And Israel took all these cities: and Israel dwelt in all the cities of the Amorites, in Heshbon, and in all the villages thereof &c.

Thus Israel dwelt in the land of the Amorites.

And Moses sent to spy out Jaazer, and they took the villages thereof, and drove out the Amorites that were there. And they turned and went up by the way of Bashan, and Og the king of Bashan went out against them, he and all his people, to the battle at Edrei &c. So they smote him and his sons, and all his people until there was none left him alive: and they possessed his land.

7. From Numb. c. xxii to c. xxv, we have the narrative of Balak and Balaam: but though the Moabites, whose king was Balak, seem disposed to make common cause with the Midianites against the Hebrews, yet nothing of a hostile nature immediately ensues; for we read in ch. xxv, 1—3:

And Israel abode in Shittim, and the people began to commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab. And they called the people unto the sacrifices of their gods: and the people did eat, and bowed down to their gods. And Israel joined himself unto Baal-peor: and the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel.

Then we read of Zimri, the Simeonite, who was slain with Cozbi the Midianitish woman. When these excesses were checked, a detachment of a thousand men from each tribe defeated the Midianites; but, though all the adult male captives were put to death, yet the females and children were kept alive, though Moses afterwards commanded them to

kill every male among the little ones, and kill every woman that hath known man by lying with him. But all the women children, that

have not known a man by lying with him, keep alive for yourselves. NUMB. xxxi, 17—18.

The reason of this reservation is but too well understood : slavery and concubinage were the lot of these young females whose lives the fury of the war had spared.

By this summary, then, we see that the conquest of their destined country by the Israelites, was gradually effected. Before the death of Moses they had taken possession of the kingdoms of Bashan, Sihon, and portions of the Moabish territories. These were assigned to the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half of the tribe of Manasseh, and were at once occupied by them before the death of Moses. It is not necessary to detail all the events which followed. The death of Moses is generally placed in the year before Christ 1451, and in that year or the following, Joshua led the Israelites over the river Jordan. The conquest of the land occupied, it is said, twenty nine years ; but this is one of those conventional dates which are adopted for the sake of forming a system of chronology. It is difficult to say when the conquest of the Holy Land was complete : for the different nations which possessed it, were alternately defeated and victorious ; whilst the Israelites were, in consequence of these vicissitudes of fortune, sometimes tributary to their enemies, sometimes in the receipt of tribute from them. These alternations of fortune arose from their neglect of the command of Moses, to destroy all the inhabitants of Canaan and to leave none alive. But this command was too hard for human nature to obey. The most ruthless band of savages that every perpetrated the most terrible deeds of blood, would have been unequal to the execution of such a sentence. For it was the avowed intention of the Israelitish people to occupy, not to ravage, the land of Canaan ; and, if all the inhabitants of the land had been destroyed without mercy, the whole land would have returned to a state of nature, and become a dense

wilderness. Hence we read in the first chapter of Judges the following passages :

V. 21. And the children of Benjamin did not drive out the Jebusites that inhabited Jerusalem ; but the Jebusites dwell with the children of Benjamin in Jerusalem unto this day.

V. 27. Neither did Manasseh drive out the inhabitants of Beth-shean and her towns, nor Taanach and her towns, nor the inhabitants of Dor and her towns, nor the inhabitants of Ibleam and her towns, nor the inhabitants of Megiddo and her towns : but the Canaanites would dwell in that land.

V. 29 Neither did Ephraim drive out the Canaanites that dwelt in Gezer ; but the Canaanites dwelt in Gezer among them.

V. 30. Neither did Zebulun drive out &c.

V. 31. Neither did Asher &c.

V. 33. Neither did Naphtali &c.

We repeatedly meet with the descendants of the Canaanitish tribes throughout all the history of the Jews. Some of the chief officers of the kings both of Judah and Israel, as Uriah the Hittite, belonged to these native races ; and in I kings ix, 20—21, they are described as being very numerous :

And all the people that were left of the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites, which were not of the children of Israel, their children that were left after them in the land, whom the children of Israel also were not able utterly to destroy, upon those did Solomon levy a tribute of bondservice unto this day.

It may reasonably be supposed that the Israelitish host, however numerous, when they crossed the Jordan, were yet not *so* numerous as all the inhabitants of Canaan, put together. Even when they had destroyed so many thousands of the natives, the remainder, most probably, still surpassed them in number. The Norman conquest of England is in many respects analogous to the occupation of the Holy Land by the Israelites. The enmity between



the English and Normans was intense, and years passed away before their animosities were allayed. Yet the Normans were remarkably few when compared with all the inhabitants of England; and their occupation of the country was as complete as that of Palestine by the Israelites. We do not find that the Normans exterminated the English. On the contrary the English have so completely overgrown and amalgamated the foreign race that no difference is now observable between the two people. Their language, also, is the same, and, what bears more closely upon our argument, the present language of England is different from the Norman-French on the one hand, and the Anglo-Saxon on the other, which were spoken by the contending parties at the time of the Norman Conquest.

In the same way, it may be argued, the language which the Israelites brought with them out of Egypt, must have come into collision, when they entered Canaan, with that which was spoken by the inhabitants of that country. The natural result is evident. A gradual union of the two would be effected, which in process of time would produce a third, different, but yet not totally different, from both. This has always happened in every country where two hostile races of people have sunk down into a quiet and peaceful population.

From the date, then, at which we have now arrived, B. C. 1421, when the Israelites entered Canaan, to the time when they were carried captive to Babylon, about 600 before Christ, nearly nine hundred years elapsed. This is a hundred years more than have passed since the Norman Conquest to the present time. Was then the language of Joshua and his invading host the same as that afterwards spoken by Hezekiah and the other kings who reigned in Israel just before the Babylonian Captivity? The question may be solved by reference to our own country. During the 800 years that have passed since the Norman Conquest



the English language has changed so much that a book written in English at the time of the Conquest would be now unintelligible to a common reader. Indeed many such books have been preserved, and they *are* unintelligible to all but scholars. Yet England has received no importation of foreigners since the Conquest—not even an invading army has ever remained a day amongst us, and the nations, Norman and Saxon, began from the first to amalgamate. But in the case of the Holy Land all is different. The country was continually exposed to the ravages of foreign armies, and a hundred years before the last exportations of the Israelites to Babylon, colonies of Assyrians, and a rabble of every description began to occupy the lands from which Israelitish masters had been displaced. Again, in the year B. C. 560, when the Israelitish captives who had been carried to Babylon, were all dead, leaving behind them the children which, by a law of Nature, are born even to captives and to slaves,—when these children, having reached the age of manhood, were allowed, after years of slavery, to return to Palestine, is it to be supposed that their language was still the same, after the vicissitudes through which it had passed?

I shall pursue the argument no further but briefly recapitulate the facts to which it has led us.

1. The patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, spoke the language of the Canaanites, among whom they dwelt, whatever that language may have been.

2. Jacob, by his residence in Mesopotamia, acquired a knowledge of the Chaldaic dialect which was the principal language of all his family, who were born and educated in Mesopotamia.

3. Jacob's descendants in Egypt lost their native tongue and acquired that of the Egyptians.

4. The Israelites again underwent a change or modifica-

tion of their language by admixture with the inhabitants of Canaan.

5. The lapse of 900 years from the entrance into Canaan to the return from Captivity in 536 effected another change of dialect so decided, that two persons, living, one at the beginning, the other at the end of this period, could not have understood one another.

6. In conclusion, and as the consequence of the former five propositions, it follows that Moses must have written whatever he wrote, in the Egyptian language, or that what he wrote would have been unintelligible to those for whose use he wrote. So that either the Pentateuch, which we now have, is not the original work of Moses, or it is written in the Egyptian language—a theory which no writer has yet ventured to affirm.

#### NOTE.

The following interesting extract is from Dr Bosworth's learned work on the Origin of the English, Germanic and Scandinavian languages :

The sounds of a language, like other things, are by time subject to mutations, and these changes are homogeneous or heterogeneous, according as the cause of change is internal or external. In this way diphthongs become vowels, and vowels again diphthongs. An elaborate treatise would point out the changes in a language, if an uninterrupted succession of MSS. of different ages could be procured.

Independently of these succeeding general changes of the whole language, there are diversities existing at the same time, called dialects. The Anglo-Saxon is subject to these diversities in the highest degree, and with a free people it could not be otherwise. When a nation easily submits to

an absolute sway, individuals have little attachment to what is their own in character and opinions, and easily suffer themselves to be modelled in one general mould of the court or priesthood. On the other hand, when a nation, as the Angles and Friesians, is jealous of its liberty, and will only submit to the law enacted for the public good, while every individual regulates his private affairs for himself, the slightest peculiarity of character, unrestrained by the assumed power of any mortal, develops itself freely in the proper expressions, and every individuality is preserved. This I believe is the reason why in the province of Friesland are more peculiarities than in the other six provinces of the present kingdom of the Netherlands, and more in England alone than in the whole of Europe. Applying this principle in language, the very mirror of the soul, we find the same variety; so that among a people so fond of liberty as the Angles and Friesians, not only every district, but every village, nay, every hamlet, must have a dialect of its own. The diversity of dialects since the French Revolution of 1795, is much decreasing by the centralisation of power taking daily more effect in the Netherlands: the former republic, by leaving to every village the management of its domestic affairs, preserved every dialect unimpaired. Nevertheless, at this very time, those living on the coast of *Eastmahorn*, in Friesland, do not understand the people of *Schiermonikoog*, a little island with one village of the same name, almost in sight of the coast. The *Hindelopians* speak a dialect unintelligible to those living at the distance of four miles from them. Nay, the Friesians have still dialects with a dialect.

“In the village where I was born,” [*says Mr Halbertoma, as quoted by Dr Bosworth, p. 37*] we said indiscriminately, after, efter, and æfter, ANGLO-SAXON æfter; tar, and tær, ANGLO-SAXON tare; par and pær, A.-S. pera; tarre, and tære *consumere*, A.-S. teran; kar, and kær, A.-S. cyre;

hi lei, and hi láí, A.-S. læg; perfect tense of 'ik lizz,' hī leit, A.-S. licge, lið; smarre, and smære, A.-S. smerian; warre, and wære, warge and wæрге, A.-S. weran, werian *tueri, resistere*. On this matter I can produce a very striking example in the centre of Friesian nationality. It is now, I believe, sixteen years since I spoke to an old woman at Molquerum, a village now almost lying in ruins, but still divided into seven little islands, called *Pollen*, joined to each other by (breggen A.-S. bricgas) *little bridges*. Now the good woman told me in her homely style, that, when she was a child, every island had its peculiar way of pronouncing, and that when an inhabitant of any of the villages entered her mother's house, she could easily ascertain to which *Pol* the person belonged, merely by some peculiarity of speech. Dependence may be placed on this fact, as I have ascertained its truth by strict enquiry. I have no doubt the same peculiarity was observable in almost every village of the Anglo-Saxons. Every Englishman who notices the diversity of dialects to be found in Yorkshire, Durham, Northumberland, Cumberland, or Lancashire, and by these judges of the rest, and considers what they have formerly been, will perhaps enter, in some measure, into my views."



## CHAPTER 24.

THAT THE CHALDEE LANGUAGE WAS THE RESULT OF THE ROMAN CONQUEST OF JUDÆA, AND NOT OF THE BABYLONISH CAPTIVITY—  
PROVED 1ST FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT.

It has been remarked at the beginning of our second chapter that the Hebrew Scriptures are “written mostly in the Hebrew, but partly in a different language, called *Chaldee* ;” and I propose now to examine this point a little more minutely. To determine the nature of this second language, called *Chaldee*, is of the utmost importance to our argument, because it is affirmed, but without any evidence of fact to support the affirmation, that this Chaldee was, from the time of Ezra to that of Christ, the common language of the Jews, who had forgotten the old Hebrew language during the Babylonish Captivity.

In the first place it must be observed that the portions of the Old Testament, written in this Chaldee dialect, consist of only 283 verses altogether.

These are: Jeremiah, chap. x, verse 11. Daniel, chap. ii, verse 4 to the end of chapter vii. Ezra, chap. iv, verse 8, to chap. vii, verse 27.

1. *Ezra and others after the captivity still wrote in Hebrew and not in Chaldee.*

A serious difficulty here immediately presents itself. If the Israelites during the Babylonish Captivity had forgotten the old Hebrew language, why did not Ezra, who wrote nearly 100 years after the Jews had returned from Babylon, write *all* his books in the Chaldee language, which the people, according to this theory, could have understood, rather than in the old Hebrew, which they had forgotten?

Again, it is admitted that Ezra wrote the books of Chronicles: why did he not write *them* also in Chaldee? As regards Daniel and Jeremiah, it may be said that being among those who were carried captives to Babylon, they had not forgotten the old Hebrew, in which language they accordingly wrote their books. But this solution proves too much, for the Babylonish Captivity was not effected at once: it took place at different times, as may be seen by the chronological table given in page 31, and those who were carried captive the last time, B. C. 588, may—at least some of them—have been alive when the decree of Cyrus permitted them to return. But this point shall be more fully developped hereafter. Let us return at present to the consideration of the extraordinary fact that Ezra, who professedly wrote books for popular use, is supposed to have used a language which the people, for whom he wrote them, had entirely forgotten. And not only Ezra; but Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi, all of whom wrote after the Captivity, are supposed to have used a language, which their countrymen no longer understood. This circumstance did not fail to arrest the attention of Dean Prideaux, and he has, in his learned “Connection of the History of the Old and New Testament,” taken notice of the fact, but not of its inconsistency. Following the received opinions, and not appearing to think that it was a difficulty, he has given the following account of the matter:

The common people, by having so long conversed with the Babylonians, learned their language, and forgot their own. It happened indeed otherwise to the children of Israel in Egypt. For, although they lived there above three times as long as the Babylonish Captivity lasted, yet they still preserved the Hebrew language among them, and brought it back entire with them into Canaan. The reason of this was, in Egypt they all lived together in the land of Goshen; but on their being carried captive by the Babylonians, they were dispersed all over Chaldea and

Assyria, and being there intermixed with the people of the land had their converse with them, and therefore were forced to learn their language; and this soon induced a disuse of their own among them; by which means it came to pass, that after their return, the common people, especially those of them who had been bred up in that captivity, understood not the Holy Scriptures in the Hebrew language, nor their posterity after them. And, therefore, when Ezra read the law to the people, he had several persons standing by him, well skilled in both the Chaldee and Hebrew languages, who interpreted to the people in Chaldee what he first read to them in Hebrew.

The rest of the account may be seen in the Appendix to this volume. Sufficient has been extracted to shew the nature of the explanation which the author means to give, of the remarkable fact before us. This explanation would no doubt be admissible, if Ezra had confined himself to *reading* the Scriptures for the benefit of the people, but, as he *wrote* a large quantity of new Scriptures and revised the old ones, adding—so they say—many explanatory interpretations of his own, it seems preposterous that he should adopt the language which had been forgotten, and reject that, in which alone the people could understand him, a plan no less toilsome to himself—for he also had never spoken the Hebrew—than pernicious to the best interests of the people.

But we are told that, notwithstanding this inconsistency, it is a fact that Ezra did, out of reverence perhaps to the old Law, adopt the Hebrew language for his own compositions, and that the interpretations of the whole book of the Law, which he caused to be read along with the Hebrew text, in order that the people might understand him, are those very Targums, or Chaldee paraphrases, which are still in existence, and have often been published in the Polyglott and other editions of the Hebrew Bible. This then is the case of those who argue that the Jews spoke the Chaldee language after the Babylonish captivity.



It remains to see what may be said on the opposite side of the question ; and I shall endeavour to shew, on evidence which cannot be gainsaid, that the Jews as a nation did not forget the Hebrew tongue in consequence of the Babylonish Captivity, but continued to speak it down to the time of the Christian era—or, more correctly speaking, that the Hebrew, such as we now have it, was the language spoken by the Jews, not *before* but *after* the return of that people from Babylon. It is not however denied that it was also very similar to the language spoken before the captivity, but less and less similar the nearer we approach to the time of Moses and the Exodus. In short the language of the Israelites, like that of every people upon earth, was a flowing and changing stream of words and thoughts, gathering from all sides as it went, until the Egyptian which they spoke in Egypt, became, a thousand years after, the Hebrew, the last form of the language spoken by the Jews before the Romans subverted their commonwealth never to be restored.

1. In the first place then the use of the Hebrew tongue by Jeremiah, Daniel, Ezra, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi who lived between 606 and 456, during or after the captivity, in a continuous and contemporary series, shows, if these books were written by the supposed authors, and at the periods of time here assigned to them, that the Hebrew was then a living tongue and the purity of style in their writings is not surpassed by that of the books of Moses, Joshua or Samuel.

2. The introduction of 283 verses in the Chaldee dialect, may be otherwise explained. The single verse in Jeremiah ; x, 11 : is as follows :

Thus shall ye say unto them, The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens.



This verse is in what is called the Chaldee language. I imagine it is a quotation from some book in that language, and that Jeremiah quoted the original words as more forcible than a Hebrew translation of them would be. Dr W. Lowth's commentary on this verse is as follows :

This verse is written in Chaldee, as if the prophet designed to put these words in the mouths of the Jews, wherewith they might make a public profession of their own faith in the true God, and be able to answer the heathens that would entice them to idolatry.

The Chaldee verses in Daniel and Ezra may be also satisfactorily explained. Let us turn to the first of these in Daniel chap. ii, which begins thus :

And in the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuchadnezzar dreamed dreams, wherewith his spirit was troubled, and his sleep brake from him. Then the king commanded to call the magicians, and the astrologers, and the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans, for to shew the king his dreams. So they came and stood before the king, and the king said unto them, "I have dreamed a dream, and my spirit was troubled to know the dream."

Verse 4 begins :

Then spake the Chaldeans to the king in *Syriac*, "O king, live for ever ! tell thy servants the dream, and we will shew the interpretation."

These words are in Chaldee or *Syriac*, as is declared in the words themselves ; for what is usually called Chaldee is the same as the *Syriac* which was spoken at Damascus, in Mesopotamia and among many of the nations to the north and east of Palestine. The reason why these parts of Daniel, from ch. ii, to the end of ch. vii, are written in this *Syriac* or Chaldee language is partly explained by Bishop Newton, as quoted in the notes to the Family Bible.

Hitherto the prophecies of Daniel, that is, from the fourth verse of the second chapter to this [*the viii*] chapter, are written in Chaldee.

As they greatly concerned the Chaldeans, so they were published in that language. But the remaining prophecies are written in Hebrew, because they treat altogether of affairs subsequent to the times of the Chaldeans, and relate not at all to them, but principally to the Church and people of God.

I do not dispute this reasoning, but am content with a different sort of explanation, that the Old Testament is a compilation from various sources, and that the passage, before us, forming a body of separate facts, and existing in the Syrian language, was transferred, in its totality, into the book of the Old Testament.

The passages in Ezra, which are in the Syriac or Chaldee tongue, admit of a still more ready explanation.

Chap. iv, verse 7. And in the days of Artaxerxes wrote Bishlam, Mithredath, Tabeel, and the rest of their companions, unto Artaxerxes king of Persia; and the writing of the letter was written in the Syrian tongue, and interpreted in the Syrian tongue. Rehum the Chancellor and Shimshai the scribe wrote a letter against Jerusalem to Artaxerxes the king in this sort: Then wrote Rehum the chancellor, and Shimshai the scribe, and the rest of their companions; the Dinaites, the Apharsathchites, the Tarpelites, the Apharsites, the Archevites, the Babylonians, the Susanchites, the Dehavites, and the Elamites, and the rest of the nations whom the great and noble Asnapper brought over, and set in the cities of Samaria, and the rest that are on this side the river, and at such a time. This is the copy of the letter that they sent unto him, even unto Artaxerxes the king; Thy servants the men on this side the river, and at such a time. Be it known unto the king, that the Jews which came up from thee to us are come unto Jerusalem, &c.

This is the beginning of what is termed the Chaldee portion of the book of Ezra, and it extends to the 27th verse of the seventh chapter.

But here also, as in Daniel. the extract says of itself that it is in the Syrian tongue, and neither in Daniel or Ezra is any mention made of any distinct Chaldee language at all. But it is easy to be perceived why this portion of Ezra is not in Hebrew. The whole of it consists of au-

thentic documents, the first of which is the letter of Rehum and the others above-mentioned. Is it remarkable that their letter to the Persian king should be written in the Syriac language, which, (whether the same as the Chaldee or not) they all certainly were familiar with? On the contrary it would be most remarkable if their letter had been written in any other language. That the king of Persia might understand it, we find that it was not only written in the Syrian but also accompanied by a translation in the Syrian language, i. e., as all agree, from the Syrian tongue into the Persian. It is evident that the Persian translation could be of no use to the Jews, but the Syrian original has been preserved, and it surely would be unreasonable to expect that it should be written in Hebrew or, indeed, in any other language than the Syrian.

The question then is reduced into a very narrow compass. Did Daniel, Ezra, Jeremiah, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi write 283 verses only in the language which the Jews could understand, and deliver all the mass of their writings in a dead language, whilst on the other hand their Syrian neighbours and enemies wrote in the language of the Jews, or did these Jewish writers compose their writings in their own language, leaving the letters which their Syrian enemies wrote against them, to tell their own story in the Syrian tongue? The question may, it would seem, be answered with little or no hesitation.

But what was the nature of the Syrian or Chaldee dialect? To answer this question we must consider who were the Syrians, by whom it was spoken. Now it is wellknown that the kingdom of Syria has always been the territory bounding Israel on the north and north-east, and itself bounded on the west by the Mediterranean Sea, and on the east by the desert, into which however it stretches much farther than the corresponding eastern frontier of the Israelites. The kings of Syria were often in arms against the kingdom of



Israel, after its separation from Judah. Even before that time we read of their kings fighting against king David, but with small hopes of success whilst the twelve tribes were united under one king ; for

David slew of the Syrians two and twenty thousand men. Then David put garrisons in Syria of Damascus, and the Syrians became servants to David and brought gifts. II SAM. viii, 5. 6.

The names of Benhadad and Hazael kings of Syria, are well known to the readers of Jewish history : for the nation was powerful among the small states of that age and country, until it was destroyed by the kings of Assyria, who, as it is recorded in II Kings, xvi, 9,

went up against Damascus, and took it, and carried the people of it captive to Kir, and slew Rezin.

The king of Assyria, who destroyed the kingdom of Syria, was Tiglathpileser, to whom Ahaz, king of Judah, about the year 742 before Christ,

sent messengers....saying, I am thy servant and thy son : come up and save me out of the hand of the king of Syria, and out of the hand of the king of Israel, which rise up against me.

It was an unlucky request of Ahaz : he would have been wiser to make peace with the petty kings who molested him, than to call in the aid of the gigantic power which was at this very time extending its limits over all Asia. But sovereigns, in their wars, have no care but to extricate themselves from their immediate distress or to gain the object of their immediate pursuit. Tiglathpilezer came with speed, and destroyed Rezin king of Syria ; two years afterwards he began to cut Israel short, and to carry away its people for slaves : but like his precursor Polyphemus, he granted his friend the king of Judah a respite, and devoured him the last of the three.

From this time Syria continued to be part of the Assyrian empire, and afterwards passed with the other provinces into the hands of the Median and Persian monarchs.



It is then remarkable, that there should be a confusion between the Chaldee and the Syrian languages, for Chaldæa and Syria were certainly not the same country, though the later kingdom of Syria contained part of Chaldæa if not all of it, within its frontiers. The first instance of confusion between these two countries occurs in Judges iii, 8 :

Therefore the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel, and he sold them into the hand of Chusan-Risathaim king of Mesopotamia; and the children of Israel served Chusan-Risathaim eight years.

The word Mesopotamia seems inappropriate here, as a translation of the Hebrew word *Aramnaharaim*; in the Septuagint version it is rendered *Συρίας ποτάμων*, *Syria of the rivers*. Our translators have apparently followed the Latin Vulgate “regis Mesopotamiæ,” but the name Mesopotamia is a Greek word, and Alexander was the first Greek who explored those countries, several hundred years after the time of Chushan Risathaim.

The language spoken by the Syrians and the Assyrians was probably the same, for when “Sennacherib king of Assyria came up against all the fenced cities of Judah and took them, [II Kings xviii, 13],” he sent a detachment of his army to besiege Jerusalem, and when Rabshaheh spoke to the soldiers who were manning the walls of Jerusalem, in Hebrew, so that all might understand him, the chiefs of the garrison, fearful lest their soldiers might be tempted by fears or promises to submit, interfered and endeavoured to silence Rabshakeh.

Then said Eliakim the son of Ililkiah, and Shebna, and Joah, unto Rabshakeh, “Speak, I pray thee to thy servants in the Syrian language, for we understand it: and talk not with us in the Jews’ language in the ears of the people that are on the wall.”

Thus then we obtain the following fact: that the Syrian language spoken by the tribes and various people on the

north-east of Palestine as far as Babylon, was in existence long before the captivity of the Jews; that it continued to exist after the return of the Jews, and throughout the whole of its duration it was different from the language of the Jews: that it was the language afterwards called Chaldee, and still spoken by the aliens placed in the Holy Land after the Captivity, that the Jewish writers have written 283 verses in this language, consisting almost entirely of matters, concerning foreigners alone, and especially of documents, letters and papers, which could not have been originally written in Hebrew, and that these same writers have nevertheless written the greater part of their books in the Hebrew language. Do not these facts amount to a demonstration that the Jews still spoke Hebrew after the Babylonish Captivity notwithstanding all the suppositions and hypotheses which writers, having a theory to maintain, have advanced to the contrary?

2. *The Targums or Chaldee paraphrases are later than the Christian era, because not wanted until then.*

2. But it has been said that there are still in existence the Targums or Chaldee paraphrases which were read at the same time with the Hebrew text, that the people who had forgotten the Hebrew, might understand the meaning of their sacred books. This assertion may be met with evidence still more conclusive than the former. In the Appendix to this work will be found a list of all the Targums that are known ever to have existed, and all of them except one, are admitted to have been written long since the time of Christ. Even the earliest, in favour of which a kind of reservation may be made, is thought by Professor Eichhorn to have been written in the second century of the Christian era. It is clear, then, that none of these Targums could have been read, concurrently with the Hebrew Text, 500 years before they were written. No mention is made of them by Jerome, who lived in the 4th century

after Christ, or by any other of the Christian Fathers of the Church. Most of them are loose paraphrases, which convey an imperfect idea of the original, and contain tales taken out of the Talmud, a well known collection of legends and falsehoods, written hundreds of years after the date of the Hebrew Canon.

The Targums were certainly written many years after the destruction of Jerusalem, when the Israelites, expelled from their country, had forgotten the Hebrew language, but still managed to maintain the appearance of a school of learning among the inhabitants of Syria and Babylonia, where they were principally scattered, and where they naturally forgot the Hebrew and learnt the Chaldee or Syriac language spoken in those countries. We shall see that the same inference may be obtained with equal clearness from the case of the vowel-points which shall now be considered.

3. *Vowel-points and accents modern—the want of them not felt until after the times of Christ—i. e. the Hebrew was still a living language at the beginning of the Christian era.*

In the mature state of an alphabetic language, such as now exists in every civilized part of the world, except China, and the countries immediately adjoining to it, we find two classes of written characters, grammatically designated as vowels and consonants. Vowels are generally defined to be such letters as can be sounded by themselves, whereas consonants can only be sounded with the help of vowels. Notwithstanding this apparent superiority of vowels over consonants, yet there can be no doubt that consonants have preceded vowels, in the first formation of every language : and for good reasons. The vowels, generally considered to be five in number, express sounds which hardly can be called articulate, but are rather similar to



the utterances of irrational animals : they are, in fact, a mere expiration of the breath, modified by the various shape of the lips and tongue. The consonants, however, b, k, l, m, &c. though requiring the aid of a vowel sound, give that wonderful distinctness and variety to human language, which forms the predominant advantage of our species over the brute creation.

In illustrating the gradual progress of the Literary art from the first rudiment to the present perfection of alphabetic writing, which will form the subject of a future chapter, I have placed the Hebrew as the first approach to a phonetic system, in distinction to the older ideographic mode. That it is properly placed in this intermediate position arises from that peculiarity of formation which gave to it consonants but not vowels. It is true that the Hebrew now no longer retains this singularity, for the vowel-points, as they are termed, render it capable of expressing every vowel sound as perfectly as any modern language. This, however, according to the best authorities, was not at first the case.

Originally, *says Professor Stuart*, [p. 17.] the Hebrew alphabet consisted only of consonants. Some learned men have maintained the contrary, and averred that א י were originally designed to be *vowels*. But the fact, that these letters constitute essential parts of the *triliteral* roots in Hebrew, and that they are susceptible of forming syllables by union with every sort of vowel sound, proves, beyond all reasonable doubt, that they are essentially *consonants*.

That a language should possess no characters to designate vowel-sounds, would certainly, at first sight, seem to present a great impediment to its free use ; but this difficulty was little felt by the Hebrews themselves, who learnt to speak their language whilst they were children, for probably, very few persons, from the scarcity of books in those days, learnt to read and write at all. Even foreigners, learning the language mostly by the ear, would



care very little in what manner the words were expressed on paper; and native Hebrews, who began to learn the art of reading, would easily supply the vowel-sounds from their former perfect knowledge of the language. An illustration of this may be drawn from the English tongue, in which the vowel sounds are, indeed, expressed by certain characters, but so loosely that in some cases the latter serve rather to mislead than to guide, and to a foreigner are, remarkably often, the source of error. Thus the words, *alive*, *give*, and *river* furnish three different modes of pronouncing the letter i, and a foreigner would probably find it not more difficult to pronounce those words, if they were written without any vowels at all, thus *alv*, *gv*, *rvr*.

The account which Professor Lee gives of the introduction of the vowel-points into the Hebrew is supported by the opinion of most philologists who have written on this subject. In his Hebrew grammar, Art. 39, page 15, he writes thus :

When the Hebrew and Syriac tongues were vernacular, the vowels would only be wanted in words which would otherwise be ambiguous; and we find in the old Syriac Estrangelo manuscripts, that these vowel marks are mostly added, when this would be the case. Thus a participle present has almost invariably a point placed over the first radical letter, directing the first consonant to be pronounced with an *o*; the preterite, in like manner, has a single point under one of its radicals, mostly the second, directing that consonant to be pronounced with an *a*. The same is observed in other words, which have the same consonants with each other, but which ought to be pronounced with different vowels. This is sufficient, even now, to guard against any ambiguity which might arise in reading the Syriac text. In most of the Arabic manuscripts, if we except the Koran, a few vowels only are added for a similar purpose: which has also been done by some of the best editors of Arabic books in modern times. In these cases, no one will object, that every danger of ambiguity is sufficiently removed; and it may hence be inferred, that a similar practice would be quite sufficient, so long as the Hebrew language continued to be generally spoken. When,

however, it became a dead language, and the Jews, dispersed as they were, into different nations of the earth, would naturally forget the true pronunciation of the sacred text, no less than its meaning in many important passages, it became almost necessary that every word should be fully pointed, so as to leave no doubt on the mind of the reader, as far, at least, as such a system of punctuation would go. For this purpose, additional vowel-marks were added, and some ones invented. To which also a system of accents seems to have been added, which, taken in the aggregate, composes the system of Hebrew orthography as we now have it. At what exact period this began to take place, it is impossible to say; there is, however, good reason for believing, that it must have been after the times of Jerome, as he makes no mention whatever of it.

That it was completed later than the twelfth century is scarcely possible, as the names of most of the vowels and accents are found in the Rabbins of that period. The school of Tiberias, and about the period A. D. 500, has generally been fixed upon as the place and time of their invention; and it is not improbable that they were there and then first partially introduced, and afterwards augmented to the number which we now have.

As these remarks of Professor Lee bear with great force on an inference which will presently be drawn from them, it will be desirable first to confirm them by adducing the testimony of Professor Stewart: in whose Hebrew grammar, page 17, we find the following:

When the diacritical signs, which distinguish the later alphabet and increase the number of letters, together with all the vowel-points and accents, were first introduced, no historical documents satisfactorily shew. But it is now generally agreed, that the introduction was a *gradual* one; and that, however early some few particular things in the general system may have been commenced, yet the whole system of diacritical signs, vowel-points, and accents, was not completed, so as to exist in its present form, *until several centuries after the birth of Christ; pretty certainly not until after the fifth century.* In regard to reading MSS. destitute of all this system of helps, there is no serious difficulty, at least none to any one who well understands the language. The same thing is habitually done, at the present day, by the Arabians, the Persians, and the Syrians, in their respective tongues; and in Hebrew

by the Jewish Rabbies, and all the learned in the Shemitish languages.

Thus, then, it appears, from the concurrent evidence of these two learned Hebrew scholars, that the language of the Israelitish people neither had nor required characters to denote the vowel sounds, whilst it continued to be a vernacular or living language, but that, when the Hebrew was no longer a spoken or living language, the vowel-points were introduced for the sake of guiding the pronunciation. But this did not take place until after the Christian era.\* It certainly follows, as a necessary deduction from these premises, that the Hebrew language was a living language at the beginning of the Christian era, and if we turn to the New Testament, we shall find, not by supposition or mere inference, but by the pointed evidence of fact, that such undoubtedly was the case.

This point is of sufficient importance to form a chapter by itself.

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\* The reader will find, in the Appendix, a long account of the vowel-points, extracted from Dr Prideaux's Connection of Sacred and Profane History.



## CHAPTER 25.

THAT THE JEWISH NATION SPOKE HEBREW AS LATE AS THE TIME OF CHRIST,—PROVED 2NDLY FROM THE NEW TESTAMENT.

It is much to be regretted for many reasons, and those not merely of a literary nature, that our knowledge of the Jewish history at the time in which Christ lived, is extremely scanty and imperfect. The reduction of all the known world into one immense empire checked that free growth of the intellect which is sure to arise in smaller states, where institutions of freedom are developped. A large empire is liable to stagnate, as an unwieldy animal, whatever may be its species, is unable to move with that agility which more limited dimensions would have allowed. The most brilliant actions of our species have arisen from the clash of contending principles, and the exertions which competing interests create. But those who govern large empires love repose rather than competition—they restrain enterprise and dignify languor with the name of order—*solitudinem faciunt, pacem appellant*. From the moment that the emperors of Rome had firmly fixed themselves in their seats of despotism, every manly sentiment began to disappear from the face of the earth, and for five hundred years hardly one writer arose, whose works can be put into competition with those which the golden age of Greece and Rome had produced.

The Jews, at this moment, were certainly not behind the rest of the world in a desire to maintain their nationality and freedom. They were the same turbulent people as ever, and by no means submitted readily to the Roman domination. If their subjection had been deferred a few



years later, so that Josephus, the only Jewish writer who has come into close contact with the literature of Greece and Rome, might have signalised his talents in the service of his own country, and in his own language, we should not have had to lament the want of Hebrew books which now drives us to the New Testament for all our information concerning the language of the Jews at this period of their commonwealth.

It has been already observed that some writers have referred the oldest of the Targums to the earliest period of the Christian era. But this opinion is rejected by others, and it is not safe to build upon a basis of doubtful stability. We are therefore obliged to recur to the New Testament for whatever indications it may furnish that the Jews still spoke the language in which the books of the Old Testament were composed, and which was as much entitled to be called the Hebrew then, as it was in the days of David, Daniel, or Malachi.

In making these observations I claim due allowance for the changes, which lapse of time, even without external causes, will invariably produce in the most stable language that ever has been spoken. But this allowance may be conceded without prejudice to either side of the question : for those who entertain a different view of the matter argue that the change of language from Hebrew to Chaldee was effected, comparatively speaking, instantaneously—as the mathematicians call it, *per saltum*—in consequence of that great national calamity, the Babylonish captivity. Let us then see what evidence the New Testament will yield to clear up this disputed part of history.

1. *The Hebrew is expressly mentioned in the New Testament as being still the language of the people.*

This is evident from the following texts :

JOHN v, 2. Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep-market a pool,

which is called *in the Hebrew tongue* Bethesda, having five porches.

JOHN xix, 17. And he, bearing his cross, went forth into a place called the place of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha.

If the Hebrew tongue had become obsolete, why did the writer of this gospel explain the names of these places in that language? It is not customary with those who write books for popular use in England to explain foreign or other names by adding their signification in the Anglo-Saxon language, which was spoken 800 years ago, but in the English language, which is still spoken in England.

The inference which these texts furnish is confirmed by the inscription placed over the cross. This is mentioned by all the four evangelists; but only Luke and John tell us the languages in which it was written:

LUKE xxiii, 38. And a superscription also was written over him in letters of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew, THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

JOHN xix, 19. And Pilate wrote a title, and put it on the cross. And the writing was JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS. This title then read many of the Jews; for the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city: and it was written in Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin.

It may be asked, with reason, why the title should be inscribed in three languages? The answer is ready: it was inscribed in Latin, because Pilate, who was a Roman, his court and his guards, spoke Latin, the language of the government; in Greek, which was the language of literature, of the better classes, and perhaps of a large part of the Roman army; and in Hebrew, because that was the language of the natives. No other explanation is admissible: for it is absurd to suppose that an inscription, which it was of course intended that all should read and understand, would be written in an obsolete dialect, which no one but the priests could understand. In fact we find that it was not written in an obsolete language, for it is said

that "this title read many of the Jews," and there can be no doubt that they understood it with as much ease as the citizens of London understand the proclamations which are sometimes fixed by the agents of the government upon the walls of the Mansion house.

## 2. *Hebrew words are found in the New Testament.*

The following are examples of words and sentences which have been handed down in the New Testament, as used by Christ and others in the course of their daily and familiar conversation :

MARK iii, 17. And James the son of Zebedee, and John the brother of James; and he surnamed them Boanerges, which is The sons of thunder.

"This word, (says Dr Whitby, in the Family Bible) is compounded of two Hebrew words explained in the text." If so, the Hebrew language must still have been the language of the inhabitants of Judæa.

MATT. xxi, 9. And the multitudes that went before, and that followed cried, saying "Hosanna to the son of David: blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord: Hosanna in the highest!"

"The word Hosanna, [says Bishop Pearce, in the Family Bible,] is an abbreviation of two Hebrew words, which signify "save now:" they are found at Ps. cxviii, 25, and were a customary acclamation of the common people on solemn occasions."

MARK xiv, 36. And he [Jesus] said, "Abba, father, all things are possible unto thee; take away this cup from me: nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt."

"Abba is the Chaldee for father" says Dr Lightfoot in the note on this verse, in the Family Bible. But is it not the Hebrew, also, for the same word? Abba is plainly the Greek form of the Hebrew אב *ab*, which denotes father.

MARK v, 41. And he [Jesus] took the damsel by the hand, and said unto her, "Talitha cumi," which is, being interpreted, "Damsel, I say unto thee, arise."

ACTS i, 19. Inasmuch as that field is called in their proper tongue Aceldama.

These words, Talitha cumi, and Aceldama, are also Hebrew, with little dialectic variation the same as they would have been, if they occurred in the Pentateuch, or the books of Joshua and Judges.

JOHN i, 41. He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, "We have found the Messias," which is, being interpreted, the Christ.

— i, 42. And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, he said "Thou art Simon the son of Jona; thou shalt be called Cephas," which is by interpretation A stone.

MARK iii, 22. And the scribes, which came down from Jerusalem, said, "He hath Beelzebub, and by the prince of the devils casteth he out devils."

Compare with this the following, from the gospel of St Matthew;

MATT. xii, 24. But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, "This fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils."

For an explanation of the name Beelzebub, we are referred, by the editors of the Family Bible, to the notes on II Kings i, 1—2, where the name Baalzebub occurs. The text of that passage runs thus:

Then Moab rebelled against Israel after the death of Ahab. And Ahaziah fell down through a lattice in his upper chamber that was in Samaria, and was sick: and he sent messengers, and said unto them, "Go, enquire of Baalzebub the god of Ekron, whether I shall recover of this disease."

The note to this passage tells us that

The word Baal-zebub signifies the "god of flies," but, how this idol came to obtain that name, it is not so easy a matter to discover.



Several are of opinion that this god was called Baal-semin, the Lord of Heaven, but that the Jews by way of contempt, gave it the name of Baal-zebub, or the lord of a fly, a god that was nothing worth, &c."

The opinion is puerile, and the commentator who quotes it, Dr Stackhouse, afterwards suggests that the name may have been given to the deity who protected the people from the flies, which molest the Asiatics as much as the mosquitoes in the West Indies.

But whatever may have been the origin of the name, it appears to have been a Hebrew name, in use before the Babylonish captivity, and still in use in the time of Christ.

JOHN i, 38. Then Jesus turned, and saw them following, and saith unto them, "What seek ye?" They said unto him Rabbi (which is to say, being interpreted, Master) where dwellest thou?

—xx, 16. Jesus saith unto her "Mary." She turned herself, and saith unto him Rabboni, which is to say Master.

I copy the following note on this verse from Dr Carpenter's Apostolical Harmony of the Gospels, p. 194, second edition 8vo Lond. 1838.

Rabboni My teacher (*or* Master). The received text has *'PaßBovv*, which is the Syro-Chaldaic form of the pure Hebrew *'Paßßv*, My Teacher, (*or* Master). The most approved reading is *'PaßBovv*, which represents the Galilæan pronunciation of *'PaßBovv*. The Rabbinical writings say that *Rabboni* is more dignified than *Rabbi*, and this than *Rab*, which simply signifies Master or Teacher. See Schleusner.

Matt. xxvii, 46. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

Some of them that stood there when they heard that, said, "This man calleth for Elias."

The account is very similar in the gospel according to St Mark ;

MARK xv, 34. And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

And some of them that stood by, when they heard it, said, "Behold, he calleth Elias."

Let us hear Dr Lightfoot's interpretation of these texts :

St Matthew gives the words *Eli, Eli*, in the Hebrew, exactly the same as they occur at Ps. xxii, 1. St Mark gives them according to the Syro-Chaldaic dialect ; which was in common use at the time of our Saviour.

From which it appears that the Syro-Chaldaic dialect, as Dr Lightfoot terms it, was remarkably similar to the Hebrew if it differed from it no more than by the addition of the letter *o* to the sentence "*Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani.*" But the truth is, we know nothing of the Syro-Chaldaic dialect, or of any other dialect than the Hebrew, as spoken at Jerusalem about the period of time when our Saviour was crucified. It is more reasonable to suppose that *Eloi*, and *Eli* are merely the forms by which two different translators have rendered the same word from Hebrew into Greek ; and this supposition is strengthened by the usage of the modern Greeks, who pronounce *Eli* and *Eloi* in the same manner, *Ailee*. But the word, as it occurs in the Psalm of David, is *Eli* : does Dr Lightfoot imply that Christ altered the word into another and a more corrupt dialect ? He could not have used both forms : which then did he use ? If *Eloi*, why has St Matthew put *Eli* into his mouth ? if however *Eli* is the word which he ejaculated, why has he been made to use the other form *Eloi* in the gospel according to St Mark ? No other solution seems so reasonable as to ascribe the discrepancy to the peculiarities of different translators.

But it is necessary to notice another observation which has been made on these texts, resting on no better foundation than the former. Some of those who stood by thought that Christ called for *Elias*. This, according to the views of some commentators, is supposed to prove that the Hebrew was no longer spoken in Jerusalem at this time ; for otherwise, say they, every body who stood

by would have understood the meaning of his words. This however would not necessarily be the case; for a man in the last agonies of death would not be likely to speak with sufficient distinctness to make his words intelligible, particularly to the lower classes, who alone are in the habit of attending executions. Nor is it likely that a quotation from the Psalms would be very intelligible to an ignorant multitude who knew little about the Bible in general, and perhaps nothing at all about the Psalms of David. The immense labour of writing out books with the pen in those days leaves us little grounds for believing that the copies of the Hebrew bible were then either numerous or extensively circulated.

3. *Proper names of persons and places are of the same character as those which occur in the Old Testament.*

Thus we have Zechariah the father of John, Joseph the reputed father of Christ, Simeon and Anna, who received Christ, when he was presented in the temple, Jonah, Barabbas, Bar-Jona, Bar-timæus (with a Latin termination), Zebedee, Eli, occurring in one genealogy as the grandfather of Christ, and Jacob who occurs in the other genealogy: whilst the name of Jesus himself, is only a Greek form of Joshua, and is therefore identical with that of the Greek captain who lived fifteen hundred years before.

Again, we have names of places in the purest Hebrew, always remembering that they come to us through the medium of a Greek translation. Such are Golgotha, Bethesda, Bethsaida, Bethlehem, and many others compounded of that remarkable word Beth, describing the idea of *house*, locality or *residence*, which is as characteristic of the Hebrew nation, as the *dune* marks the Celts all over the west of Europe, as the *ville* denotes a Norman origin, and as



as *ham* or *bourne* denotes Anglo-Saxon etymology in England.

The names of places would not, it is true, furnish so strong an argument in every case, because the same name may remain in use for many centuries, provided that the same race of people inhabit the spot which bears it. But it is said that the the whole of the Holy Land underwent a more violent change of masters than countries in general are fated to undergo. If so, the names would have been changed, as has happened in other similar cases. But the names in the Old Testament and in the New belong to the same language, which must therefore have been the same from the period of the Babylonish captivity down to the beginning of the Christian era.

#### 4. *Christ himself reads from the book of the Old Testament.*

This appears from the gospel according to St Luke, ch. iv, 16—17.

And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up ; and as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read. And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor &c.

It is said by some of the commentators that it was customary in Judea to read the original text of the Hebrew Bible verse by verse, alternately with the Targum or Chaldee paraphrase. If this was the case, why is no mention made of it in the passage before us ? No notice whatever is taken of such a remarkable custom. There was evidently no such custom, or the writers of the four gospels would have related it. It is unlikely that the scribes and Pharisees would have let slip such favorable opportunities to “ entangle him in his talk.”



But we have not the slightest indication of any discussion having arisen with regard to the interpretation of Hebrew words and sentences. It is more probable, therefore, that both Christ himself, and the people, as well as the Scribes and Pharisees, still spoke Hebrew, and consequently understood the language in which their scriptures were originally written.

## CHAPTER 26.

SUCCESSIVE CHANGES IN THE RELIGION OF THE HEBREWS RESULTING FROM THEIR CONTACT WITH FOREIGN NATIONS.

Peculiarities of speech have a sensible influence on the manners and customs of nations: religion is, perhaps, of less weight than language in its effects on national character. Still it must not be neglected, in an enquiry into either the social or intellectual state of the Hebrew people, and may contribute something to illustrate the subject now before us.

It is a trite but somewhat indistinct observation, repeated

again and again by all the commentators on the Old Testament, that the Israelites were prone to fall aside from their allegiance to the Lord God. It is certainly remarkable that those wayward people could, in defiance of the Almighty, and almost in his very presence, fall into religious absurdities in no degree surpassing the lowest idolatries of the most heathen nations. But these excesses were not without the connection of cause and effect, which might be discovered, if we could only trace it, in all the actions, however apparently absurd, both of individuals and of nations. We observe, throughout the Old Testament, in the religious observances of the Hebrews, evident marks of the external circumstances to which they were exposed. I use the name *Hebrews*, as more extensive than Israelites: Abraham, Isaac, Esau, and Jacob were Hebrews, but Israelite is a term applied to the posterity of Jacob alone.

The Old Testament, in various places, plainly indicates that the religion of Abraham, and of the nation which descended from him, was not in every particular the same. Setting aside those points in which they agreed, let us notice those in which they differed, and we shall find these are far from trivial, though not greater than might be anticipated in a nation exposed to many extraordinary vicissitudes running through so long a space of time.

The religious belief of Abraham was extremely simple. He worshipped one Almighty Being, the Lord God, Jehovah Elohim, to whom he looked for the fulfilment of hopes long held out to himself and his posterity. To the worship of God was attached the practise of expiatory sacrifice, common, so it appears, to all the Canaanitish nations; and the offering of Isaac bears a fearful likeness to the devotional enthusiasm which prompted the people of that country to give up their dearest pledges in token of submission to the Divine will. Another feature which may be detected in the religious belief of the patriarchs,

Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, is that to which the name of Anthropomorphism, *man-shape*, has been given. The opinion which represents God in the form of a man, is exceedingly liable to arise in the minds of beings endued with such narrow powers of comprehension, and yet so aspiring to that which is above us, as we are. The belief is not universal; some nations are notorious for having worshipped deities under the form of the most degrading species of the brute creation: but if we could investigate the origin of these revolting creeds, some extenuating circumstances might possibly be discovered, which would render even these cases no longer exceptions, but fresh instances, or at least illustrations, of the general rule.

The whole of the Grecian and Roman mythology describes a host of deities, whose human forms flattered the vanity of their votaries, even whilst the intellect was humbled by the rites which accompanied their worship. The mind of man, as it surveys the material universe around, seeks in vain for an agency superior to its own organization: it is conscious of powers to which every thing within its range is inferior, and by an easy and natural extension of these powers, man, in his thoughts, soon arrives at the idea of a God. Even the negative of man's positive qualities suggest new faculties by which a species of omnipotence might be gained. The power of sight suggests the idea of invisibleness: space leads the mind to reflect on infinity; and whilst the principle of gravity presses us down to the earth with the greatest force, we aspire in our imaginations to that freedom from the trammels of matter which would carry us without weight, and buoyant in spirit, above the starry spheres. As a corollary to this theorem, man not only aspires to God's heavenly seat, but dares to bring down God to the level of himself. The Lord God walked in the garden in the cool of the day, when he would enquire into the particulars of



Adam's transgression. He was repeatedly seen by Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—so was the report current among their posterity—and the last of these patriarchs is represented as having personally wrestled with the Lord.

From the nature of their Deity, and what may be called the essentials of the patriarchal religion, we naturally turn to the subordinate but still important particulars which characterised their worship. These are 1. the persons, whose duty it was to perform their rites and ceremonies: and 2. the places in which those ceremonies were performed. As regards the ministers of religion, we do not find that any existed among the Hebrews, before the sojourn in Egypt, and this fact cannot but be looked upon as of the utmost importance to a clear understanding of the Israelitish History and polity. There is no mention of priests or ministers of religion even from the creation of the world down to the time of Moses and Aaron—that is to say, among the Hebrews; for in Canaan Melchisedec was the “priest of the most high God, \*” and in Egypt we know that the priestly office existed in the time of Joseph, who is related to have married the daughter of Potipherah priest of On. The duties, which in later days devolved upon the priests, were, in the time of Abraham, performed by the patriarch himself. Each separate society consisted, in those days, of a single clan or family, who knew no other superior than the head of the clan, whose word was their law, no doubt modified by custom, into which the ideas of justice and equity more or less entered, according to the peculiar circumstances of the clan. The head of this family was also their priest, and discharged for them the few religious offices which their simple theology comprised; and this he did from the light of nature, rather than from any code of laws and canons like those which

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\* Gen. xiv, 18. The meaning of this expression has not yet been satisfactorily discovered, or explained by any of the commentators.



from the age of Moses have been continually growing and branching out in various directions, until they have caused the utmost perplexity and embarrassment to mankind.

The places, in which the religious rites of the Hebrew patriarchs were performed, were generally those which the majesty of Nature rather than the graces of architectural science, pointed out : and these were afterwards indicated by rude but lasting monuments, some of which still survive, not to tell us any history of the past, but only that they had a history, which we now shall never be able to unfold.

The earliest monuments of all nations seem to be those which belong to the rites and ceremonies of religion. Pillars, sometimes standing singly, sometimes formed into enclosures, as at Stonehenge, Avebury, the temples of Karnac, and others in Egypt, and almost every where in the ancient world, attest a similarity of construction, for which no other use can be imagined than the worship of the Supreme Being, which is so natural to the human breast. Of these massive remains, the oldest model is probably the *monolith*, as it is termed, because it consisted of a single stone ; though the term is not applicable, when the object was a stately tree, of which the stone pillar was, perhaps, an imitation. Though the Hebrew patriarchs “ worshipped not in temples made with hands,” yet they generally selected some spot shaded by the foliage and marked by the upward-pointing trunk, of some stately tree.

When Jacob hides the teraphim, the idols of his wife, he selects, as a sacred place, ‘ under the oak by Shechem.’ Deborah, Rebecca’s foster-mother, was buried with pious carefulness ‘ beneath the stones of Bethel, under an oak, and the name of it was called the oak of weeping.’ So also Saul and his sons were interred ‘ under the oak in Jabesh :’ Gideon’s angel ‘ came and sat under an oak which was in Ophrah ;’ the ‘ erring man of God ’ rests under an oak ; as if these were in the nature of consecrated trees, religious stations. In Joshua xxiv, 26, we read that the great successor of Moses ‘ took a great stone and set it up

there, under an oak, which was by the sanctuary of the Lord ;' and this selection of oaks and setting up of monolithic pillars might be illustrated by numerous other examples.\*

But the inhabitants of Canaan had already, in the time of Abraham, begun to improve on the original idea of the single tree,—standing perhaps in the centre of a surrounding plain. They already were used to plant whole groves of trees in honour of the Deity, and Abraham apparently imitates them in this particular ; for we read in the 21st chapter of Genesis, v. 23, that he

planted a grove in Beersheba, and called there on the name of the Lord, the everlasting God.

This grove, says Bishop Patrick, was built

For a solemn and retired place wherein to worship God. Hence, some think, the custom of planting groves was derived into all the Gentile world ; who so profaned them by images and filthiness, and sacrifices to demons, that God commanded them, by the law of Moses, to be cut down.

This is probable, for it does not appear that the Lord God objected to the groves themselves, but only to their being consecrated to other gods than himself. But it may be doubted that this was the first instance of a grove being planted, or that the nations of Canaan learnt this usage from a single stranger, sojourning among them. It is far more likely that Abraham planted the grove, in honour of Jehovah, on the same principle of solemnity and mysterious awe—which dense foliage conveys—as influenced the other people of Canaan, each to honour his own gods, in the same manner.

High places, also, we find, were chosen by the nations of Canaan, as peculiarly fitting for the worship of their gods. To ascribe idolatry universally to those who frequented

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\* Farley Heath, by M. F. Tupper esq. page 59.

the summits of lofty hills as sites of religious worship, would be to draw a premature and unjust conclusion from such premises. Nature, majestic in all her works, is more majestic still, viewed from the top of the heaven-pointed hill; the spirits expand with the degree of elevation which is attained, earth's toils and the cares which close in the valley, are for the moment left behind, and the soul feels or fancies that it is nearer than before to the Great Being from whom it is derived. Not until the soul becomes sunk in superstition, and reason, which is our first guide to truth, overlaid with the inhuman tenets of a barbarous ritual, not until the mountain air has been polluted by the unhallowed offering of the child to demons by his besotted parents, and other such profane doings desecrated the spot, can any sound objection be made to "High Places," which the patriarchs selected whereon to devote themselves to the worship and service of their Maker.

The sojourn in Egypt gave a new character to the faith of the tribes of Israel. They went down into that land holding a species of Deism, purer than any other form (as far as we can gather from history) that ever has existed among men. But they came out of Egypt 430 years later,\* greatly altered in this particular: as they speedily evinced by their conduct, hardly one month after they had escaped across the Red Sea. The golden calf furnishes a striking instance of the effect which their residence in Egypt had produced; the worship of the bull-god Apis—an Egyptian superstition—is too well known to be here repeated; it is sufficient to remark that the golden calf was the natural resource of a degraded nation of slaves, who finding themselves, as they supposed, without a god to protect them, speedily constructed such an one as they

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\* I abandon, as wholly untenable, the supposition that the Israelitish sojourn in Egypt must be reduced to 215 years. See page 118—152, where this subject is discussed.



had seen worshipped by their former masters the Egyptians. And again, when the people were suffering from the bite of the fiery serpents, it is related that Moses erected a brazen serpent, and

put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that, if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass he lived. NUMB. xxi, 9.

The reason why God commanded Moses to adopt this course has not been recorded : but the fact would probably be susceptible of a satisfactory explanation, if we were acquainted more fully with the serpent-worship which existed, among the ancient people of Egypt. In the absence of certain information, it may be supposed that the Israelites had been taught to hold serpents in great respect whilst they were in Egypt, and that Moses availed himself of their superstition to bend them the better to his will. At all events, the Popes, in more modern times, have not scrupled to adopt many particulars of the ancient heathen ritual, as a mode of converting the nations of Europe to the Christian faith.

A third feature, common to both the Egyptian and the Israelitish religion was the ceremony relating to the scape-goat. The Israelitish form of this ceremony is related in Leviticus xv, 7—10 :

And he [Aaron] shall take the two goats, and present them before the Lord at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and Aaron shall cast lots upon the two goats ; one lot for the Lord, and the other lot for the scape-goat. And Aaron shall bring the goat upon which the Lord's lot fell, and offer him for a sin-offering. But the goat, on which the lot fell to be the scape-goat, shall be presented alive before the Lord, to make an atonement with him, and to let him go for a scape-goat into the wilderness.

The Egyptians had a similar custom, as we learn from Herodotus, Book ii, ch. 39, who relates it in these words:



After they have killed the goat, they cut off its head, but they flay the animal's body, after which, having pronounced many imprecations on the head, those who have a market and Grecian merchants dwelling among them, carry it thither and sell it to them; but those who have no Grecian residents to sell it to, throw the head into the fire, pronouncing over it the following imprecations, "If any evil is about to befall either those that now sacrifice, or Egypt in general, may it be averted on this head!"

The two customs, though not perfectly the same, are so far similar that the one appears to have been derived from the other. The import of both is certainly the same: for in both, the goat is made use of as a substitute, to draw away calamity from the party sacrificing, in the one case being sent into the wilderness, and in the other consumed by fire.

The next particular, in which the Egyptians and Israelites bore a resemblance to one another, is the remarkable rite of circumcision. Its practise was not confined to these two nations, but was found, in the age of Herodotus, among the inhabitants of Colchis. In modern times it is known as the distinguishing mark of the Mahometans, and prevails in all those countries which have embraced their faith. It is difficult to believe that the Egyptians adopted this rite from their own slaves the Israelites; and it is equally hazardous to say that the Israelites borrowed it from the Egyptians; for it was first adopted by Abraham, at the command of God: and yet, as Abraham is known to have passed some time in Egypt, the question seems still to be admissible, how far he may have adopted it by imitation from the people, among whom he sojourned.

These four points of similarity between the Egyptian and Israelitish modes of worship are all that I propose to bring forwards, but a treatise might be written on the subject; founded in part on the account which Herodotus gives of the Egyptian sacred rites, and partly drawn from

other sources. The view which I have here taken, has, it appears, forced itself upon the mind of a living writer, Mr Sharp, who has lately published a History of Egypt, displaying great learning and research. The observations which here follow, taken from his work, are suitable to our present subject :

How much the Jews were indebted to the Egyptians for their learning, philosophy, and letters, is one of the most interesting inquiries in ancient history. Moses had been brought up in the neighbourhood of Heliopolis, the chief seat of Egyptian philosophy, and carefully educated in all the learning of the Egyptians, under the tutorship, as tradition says, of Jannes and Jambres, while too many of the Israelites were given up to the idolatry and superstitious of the country. Hence many of the Egyptian customs, as seen by the historian Manetho, are clearly pointed at and forbidden by the laws of Moses, while others, which were free from blame, are even copied in the same laws ; and much light may be thrown on the manners of each nation by comparing them together. The chief purpose for which the Jews were set apart from the other nations seems to have been to keep alive the great truth, that the Creator and Governor of the world is one—a truth assailed by the superstitious in all ages ; and Moses proclaimed, that all the gods which the Egyptian priests wished the ignorant multitude to worship were false. The Egyptians worshipped the stars as emblems of the gods, the sun under the name of Rea, and the moon as Joh or Isis ; but among the Jews, whoever worshipped any one of the heavenly bodies was to be stoned to death. The Egyptians worshipped statues of men, beasts, birds and fishes ; but the Jews were forbidden to bow down before any carved image. The Egyptian priests kept their heads shaved ; while the Jewish priest was forbidden to make himself bald, or even to cut the corner of his beard. The people of Lower Egypt marked their bodies with pricks, in honour of their gods ; but the Jews were forbidden to cut their flesh or make any mark upon it. The Egyptians buried food in the tombs with the bodies of their friends, and sent gifts of food to the temples for their use ; but the Jews were forbidden to set apart any food for the dead. The Egyptians planted groves of trees within the court-yard of their temples, as the Alexandrian Jews did in later times ; but the laws of Moses forbade the Jews to plant any trees near the altar of the Lord. The sacred bull Apis was chosen by the priests of

Memphis for its black and white spots, and Mnevis, the sacred bull of Heliopolis, had nearly the same marks ; but the Jews, in preparing their water of purification, were ordered to kill a red heifer without a spot. HISTORY OF EGYPT, pp. 33—35.

The return of the Israelites into the land of Canaan opens to our view a third period of their history, and a third state of their religion. The priests and Levites play a conspicuous part every where among them, deriving their institution from Moses, but, singularly enough, not practising his precepts or preserving the purity of worship which he had taught them.

It would extend this work indefinitely to enter here into a full examination of this subject. I shall therefore name only one circumstance which implies that the people, returning to the country of their ancestors, resumed at least one custom which had existed in the times of the patriarchs. This was the practise of having household gods, exemplified in the history of Micah, JUDGES chap. xvii, 4.

And the man Micah had an house of gods, and made an ephod, and teraphim, and consecrated one of his sons who became his priest.

This reminds us of the flight of Jacob from Padan-aram, when Rachel stole the images, (teraphim in the Hebrew) belonging to her father.

GENESIS xxxi, 19. And Laban went to shear his sheep : and Rachel had stolen the images that were her father's.

Laban pursues Jacob in his flight towards Canaan, and in his expostulation, when he comes up with him, he uses these words :

And now, though thou wouldest be gone, because thou sore longedst after thy father's house ; yet wherefore hast thou stolen my gods ?

Bishop Patrick and Dr Stackhouse explain the teraphim as

objects of worship or instruments of divination. It is supposed that



Rachel stole them ; either because, having still a tincture of superstition, she feared Laban should enquire of them which way Jacob was gone ; or because, having been brought off by Jacob from the false notions and bad customs of her country, she desired to convince her father of his superstition, by letting him see, that his gods (as he called them) could not preserve themselves, much less be of any service to him : or because she intended to give herself some portion of his goods which she thought justly belonged to her, and of which he had deprived her. It is supposed the images were made of gold or silver, or some other valuable substance.

Dr Lightfoot represents the teraphim in a different point of view :

The teraphim were probably the pictures or statues of some of Rachel's ancestors, and taken by her for the preservation of their memory, when she was about never to see her country and father's house again.

But it is in vain that the commentators essay to evade a fact which speaks in loud accents that idolatry was the religion of those times, not, possibly, primary idolatry, such as the statue of the Olympian Jove indicated among the Greeks, but an inferior species, by which even men, who recognize the power and majesty of the great God Almighty, as they are shewn in his magnificent works—the works of Nature—are yet prone to deal in inferior agencies, spirits, wizards, ghosts, charms, and amulets,—any thing, in short, which brings down the great idea of God to the low level of their own weak understandings.

A striking contrast to this image-worship is presented by the same people, when they came back from Babylon—no more teraphim, or household deities—no thing more is said of a plurality of deities—the gods of the mountains and the gods of the plains merge into the omnipotence of the one God, surrounded by the angels, archangels, and the whole army of Heaven. Conspicuous, however, above all his satellites is the Almighty Jehovah ; his attributes are those, which, in the present day, are held in reverence by half the



world, and his religion assumes that shape which we find impressed upon the Gospel-histories of the New Covenant.

But this majestic scheme of an Almighty Creator and Preserver of the Universe surrounded by the Heavenly Host was contrasted, in the later theology of the Hebrews, with a corresponding picture of a rival agency, always engaged in counteracting the benevolent purposes of Jehovah. Satan was the name of this demon or hostile spirit; and under his commands were a legion of evil spirits, ever abiding his bidding and ready to do his will. This particular phase of the religious belief of the Jews is not recognised in their history before the return from the Babylonish Captivity: and as the religion of the Persians is known to have turned upon the same peculiarities, it is a reasonable inference that the Jews first acquired these views during the seventy years which the principal men of their nation passed among the Chaldean, Babylonian and Persian philosophers, who followed the doctrines of Zoroaster.\*

From the time that this new element entered into the religion of the Jews, a corresponding meaning is found attached to the word Satan, שטן, which formerly signified

\* Hyde and Prideaux, working up the Persian legends and their own conjectures into a very agreeable story, represent Zoroaster as a contemporary of Darius Hystaspes. But it is sufficient to observe, that the Greek writers, who lived almost in the age of Darius, agree in placing the æra of Zoroaster many hundred, or even thousand, years before their own time. The judicious criticism of Mr Moyle perceived, and maintained against his uncle Dr Prideaux, the antiquity of the Persian prophet. See his work, vol. ii. GIBB. ch. viii, vol. i, p. 319. of the 12 vol. 8vo edition.

That ancient idiom [IN WHICH THE ZENDAVESTA WAS COMPOSED] was called the Zend. The language of the commentary, the Pehlvi, though much more modern, has ceased many ages ago to be a living tongue. This fact alone (if it is allowed as authentic) sufficiently warrants the antiquity of those writings, which d'Anquetil has brought into Europe, and translated into French. GIBB. ch. viii, vol. i, p. 319 of the 12 vol. 8vo edition.

nothing more than an enemy, or adversary, but now began to be the designation of the power of evil. Used in this sense, for the Devil, the word Satan occurs in only four passages of the old Testament; and even in one of these it is inaccurately so rendered in our English bible, for the word means nothing more than adversary in that verse also. The place where it is inaccurately rendered by the English word Satan, meaning the Devil, is in Psalm cix, verse 6:

Set thou a wicked man over him; and let Satan stand at his right hand.

Here there seems to be no necessity for understanding the word to have any other meaning than that of adversary, by which a very satisfactory sense for the passage is obtained.

But the other passages, in which the word Satan is found in its new sense, occur in books which were undoubtedly written after the return of the Jews from Babylon—written, i. e. wholly, and not compiled out of ancient originals, whose words have generally been preserved entire. They are the following:

I CHRON. xxvi, 1. And Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel.

JOB i, 6. Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them. And the Lord said unto Satan &c. &c.

ZECHARIAH iii, 1—2. And he shewed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him. And the Lord said unto Satan, "The Lord rebuke thee &c."

The books of Chronicles are universally admitted, as has been already often remarked in this work, to belong to the later period of the Jewish Commonwealth. Zechariah also is admitted to have written about the same time, and those who still blindly look upon the book of Job as a work of very remote antiquity, have to encounter and explain the

difficulties occasioned by the Greek terms Pleiades, Orion, and others, therein occurring, which were not known to the Jews until after their intercourse with the Greeks.

But the passage in Chronicles may be compared with the corresponding narrative in II SAM. xxiv, 1, where David's sin in numbering the people is described :

And again the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and he moved David against them to say, Go, number Israel and Judah.

Here it is the anger of the Lord against Israel, which prompts David to commit an act that was disagreeable to God: but in Chronicles it is the enmity of the Devil or Evil Spirit, which impels the king to sin. The former account flowed naturally from the opinions which the ancient Israelites held concerning the anthropomorphism and, consequently, the human feelings of anger, friendship and revenge, which they ascribed to the Almighty. The latter narrative was written when the Jews had imbibed other notions of evil, which they were probably the more ready to adopt, because the character of the Deity was thereby relieved from the imputation of sometimes being the cause which impelled mankind to sin. The two antagonistic principles of the Persian or Chaldean theology easily caught the warm imaginations of the Jewish people, who did not perceive that the belief in a God of Evil narrowed the dominion of the God of Good, in the same proportion as it exalted his moral perfections.

Another word, which furnishes aid to our present subject, is the word Nabi "prophet," which, as already hinted in page 139, was either a new word, acquired by the Jews at Babylon, or was afterwards used in an altered sense in consequence of the arts of astrology, prophecy and divination, for which the Chaldees were famous, not only in the time of Cyrus, Ezra and Nehemiah, but 500 years afterwards, at Rome, Alexandria, and in almost every country of the known world.

The notices which the Greek and Roman writers have left concerning these peculiarities of the Israelitish people, are in general very slight; this arises, no doubt, from the reserve which the Jews always showed towards other nations, amounting, in fact, to moroseness and animosity towards all foreigners. Yet Diogenes Laertius, in his *Proëm*, section vi, has described the Jewish theology as an offshoot from that of the Chaldees, to whom he attributes the power of divination or prophesy, and the belief in two opposite principles, the one of evil and the other of good. The whole section is curious, and bears so close a relation to the present subject that no excuse is needed for quoting it at length :

*English translation.*

They say that the Chaldees occupied themselves with astronomy and foretelling : and the Magi with the worship of the gods, and sacrifices and prayers, as being the only persons whom the gods listened to. And that they make declarations concerning the being and origin of the gods, whom they state to be Fire, Earth, and Water. That they condemn images, and especially those persons who say that the gods are male and female.

7. That they deliver discourses on justice, and think it unholy to dispose of the dead by burning them. That they approve of a union with one's mother or daughter, as Sotion observes in his 23rd book. That they study divination and prophesy, and say that the gods appear to them. That the air is full of forms, which by emanation from the burning of incense are admitted to the sight of those who have sharp eyes. That they forbid the wearing of artificial and golden ornaments. Their clothing is white; their bed a pallet : their food is herbs, and cheese, and a cheap kind of bread; their staff is a cane, with which, it is said, they pierce their cheese, and so divide and eat it.

8. But they are not acquainted with magical divination, as Aristotle observes in his *Treatise on Magic*, and Dinon in the fifth book of his *History*. The latter also says that Zoroaster, interpreted, means 'the starworshipper,' and Hermodorus says the same. Aristotle, in the fifth book of his *Philosophy*, says that they are more ancient than the Egyptians, and that they hold two principles, a good genius, and an evil



genius, the former named Zeus [Jupiter] or Oromasdes, the latter Hades [Pluto] or Arimanius. Hermippus also mentions this in his first book on the Magi, and Eudoxus in his Period, and Theopompus in the eighth book of his Philippics.

9. He says also that, according to the Magi, men will rise from the dead, and become immortal, and that things will remain by their appellations. The same is related by Eudoxus of Rhodes. But Hecataeus says that, according to the Magi, the gods are also born : and Clearchus of Soli, in his book on Education, says that the Gymnosophists are descended from the Magi. Some say that the Jews also are an offshoot from them. Moreover those who have written about the Magi, condemn Herodotus, observing that Xerxes did not throw his javelin up at the sun, nor cast chains upon the sea, because these have been declared by the Magi to be gods : but that his removing statues was a very likely thing for him to do.

Even the Jewish writings themselves bear testimony to the Oriental origin of their celestial hierarchy : for the Jerusalem Talmud says that the names of the angels, as well as of the months, came from Babylon with the Jews who were returning from captivity.\* In haste to pass on to the more immediate objects of this work, I leave this brief sketch to be filled out by others who may entertain the same views, with more leisure and greater ability to extend them.

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\* See Beausobre, *Histoire de la Manichéisme*. tom. ii, p. 624. Jamblichus, in his *Ægyptiaca*, § ii, ch. 3, speaks of angels, archangels and seraphim.

## CHAPTER 27.

THAT THE BOOKS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT ARE LATER THAN THE  
BABYLONISH CAPTIVITY.

In former chapters it has been shewn, by internal evidence, that the early books of the Hebrew Scriptures have been compiled at a later date than the age of Moses, Joshua and Samuel their supposed authors. This point must now be examined and established a little more minutely, and the arguments stated, on which is based the belief that the whole of the Old Testament was compiled out of original documents, and written, or re-written into its present form, at some period of Jewish history later than the Babylonish captivity.

1. *Close connexion of the narrative from Genesis to the second book of Kings.*

One of the arguments which have been adduced for the assertion that the Old Testament is a continuous narrative—i. e. continuous, as far as a compilation which retains the several legends entire, can possibly be—is the close verbal connection which is manifest between the several divisions of the volume. Now, as it is notorious that the second book of Kings must have been written after the Babylonish captivity, because it relates facts which happened many years after that event, it follows that the whole bible to the end of the second book of Kings must have been compiled at a later period than the captivity of Babylon. For, the whole of a book, which is supposed to be one and complete, must have been written nearly at the same time. Such, at least, is the generally received opinion of those who are conversant with books and the various questions which relate to them.

But there are other powerful reasons which lead to the same conclusion.

*2. Silence concerning the mode in which the book of the Law was preserved during the captivity.*

We have an indirect testimony to the non-existence of the Pentateuch before the Captivity in the remarkable silence which all the Hebrew Scriptures observe concerning the mode in which this valuable national relic may have been preserved during the convulsions which tore the Jewish state and ended in the temporary destruction of its nationality. Either the book was conveyed to Babylon or it was left in Judæa. But Judæa was deprived of its principal inhabitants : those who remained were too ignorant to appreciate such a volume as the Pentateuch and unlikely to have preserved it. Those of the nation who were carried to Babylon may have conveyed it with them in secret, though it is not likely that such an ancient and important document should have escaped the hands of Shishak, Nebuchadnezzar and others who so often spoliated the Jewish Temple. We read of the silver and the gold, with other valuables which were carried away by those invaders, either into Egypt or to Babylon, but it is not related that they got possession of any book held in reverence by the Jewish people, or that the priests used any device to prevent their sacred books from falling into the hands of the enemy. In all these cases of plunder the historian is very explicit in describing the nature and extent of the booty which they carried off. When Shishak returned to Egypt after invading Palestine, we read as follows :

So Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem, and took away the treasures of the house of the Lord, and the treasures of the king's house ; he took all : he carried away also the shields of gold which Solomon had made. II Chron. xii, 9.



And again, when Nebuchadnezzar returned to Babylon, the treasures which accompanied him are thus described.

Against him [Jehoiakim] came up Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and bound him in fetters, to carry him to Babylon. Nebuchadnezzar also carried of the vessels of the house of the Lord to Babylon, and put them in his temple at Babylon. Now the rest of the acts of Jehoiakim, and his abominations which he did, and that which was found in him, behold they are written in the book of the kings of Israel and Judah : and Jehoiachin his son reigned in his stead. Jehoiachin was eight years old when he began to reign, and he reigned three months and ten days in Jerusalem : and he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord. And, when the year was expired, king Nebuchadnezzar sent and brought him to Babylon, with the goodly vessels of the house of the Lord, and made Zedekiah his brother king over Judah and Jerusalem. II Chron. xxxvi, 6-10.

In neither of these passages, though so many valuable articles of plunder are enumerated, is there the least notice taken of the book of the Law, or of any book at all. This surely gives rise to a strong suspicion that the sacred books of the Jews did not then exist ; for books were, in ancient times, not only not disregarded, but actually held in the highest esteem. A copy of the Hebrew bible, written by the hand, on vellum, or any other valuable substance, would even in the present day cost a considerable sum of money, certainly as much as several pairs of silver, or even gold candlesticks ; and we know from history, that manuscripts have been considered, even by kings, as the most costly and valuable of their treasures. If the original manuscript of Moses or even an authentic copy of it had been preserved down to the time of Nebuchadnezzar, we should certainly have learnt from later writers, with sorrow, that it was seized and carried to Babylon by the plunderers, or they would have triumphantly described the interposition of Providence, by which their national relic was preserved from profane hands.

But no information has been preserved to us on this



very important question; and in the absence of such authentic data, modern writers, who treat of this period of Jewish history, are compelled to interweave such facts as are recorded with conjectures of their own in order to account for the appearance of the book of the Old Testament in its present totality. The most liberal and intelligent account of this matter that I have seen is to be found in Dr Milman's *History of the Jews* (vol. ii, p, 25):

Ezra, who had been superseded in the civil administration by Nehemiah, had applied himself to his more momentous task—the compilation of the Sacred Books of the Jews. Much of the Hebrew literature was lost at the time of the Captivity; the ancient Book of Jasher, that of the wars of the Lord, the writings of Gad and Iddo the Prophet, and those of Solomon on Natural History. The rest, particularly the Law, of which, after the discovery of the original by Hilkiah, many copies were taken; the historical books, the poetry, including all the prophetic writings, except those of Malachi, were collected, revised, and either at that time, or subsequently, arranged, in three great divisions: the Law, containing the five Books of Moses; the Prophets, the historical and prophetical books; the Hagiographa, called also the Psalms, containing Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the song of Solomon. At a later period, probably in the time of Simon the Just, the books of Malachi, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther were added, and what is called the Canon of Jewish Scripture finally closed. It is most likely that from this time the Jews began to establish synagogues or places of public worship and instruction, for the use of which copies of the sacred writings were multiplied. The law, then revised and corrected, was publicly read by Ezra, the people listening with the most devout attention; the feast of Tabernacles was celebrated with considerable splendour. After this festival a solemn fast was proclaimed: the whole people, having confessed and bewailed their offences, deliberately renewed the covenant with the God of their fathers. An oath was administered, that they would keep the law; avoid intermarriages with strangers; neither buy nor sell on the Sabbath; observe the sabbatical year, and remit all debts according to the law; pay a tax of a third of a shekel for the service of the temple; and offer all first-fruits, and all tithes to the Levites. Thus the Jewish constitution was finally re-established.

In the twelfth year of his administration Nehemiah returned to the Persian court. But the weak and unsettled polity required a prudent and popular government. In his absence affairs soon fell into disorder. Notwithstanding the remonstrances of Malachi, the last of the prophets, the solemn covenant was forgotten; and on his return, after a residence of some time in Persia, Nehemiah found the High Priest, Eliashib himself, in close alliance with the deadly enemy of the Jews, Tobiah the Ammonite, and a chamber in the temple assigned for the use of this stranger. A grandson of the High Priest had taken as his wife a daughter of their other adversary Sanballat. Others of the people had married in the adjacent tribes, had forgotten their native tongue, and spoke a mixed and barbarous jargon; the Sabbath was violated both by the native Jews and by the Tyrian traders, who sold their fish and merchandize at the gates of Jerusalem. Armed with the authority of a Persian satrap, and that of his own munificent and conciliatory character—for as governor he had lived on a magnificent scale, and continually entertained 150 of the chief leaders at his own table—Nehemiah reformed all these disorders. Among the rest he expelled from Jerusalem Manasseh, the son of Joiada, (who succeeded Eliashib in the high priesthood), on account of his unlawful marriage with the daughter of Sanballat the Horonite. Sanballat meditated signal revenge. He built a rival temple on the mountain of Gerizim, and appointed Manasseh High Priest; and thus the schism between the two nations was perpetuated for ever. The Jews ascribe all the knowledge of the law among the Samaritans, even their possession of the sacred books, to the apostacy of Manasseh.\* The rival temple, they assert, became the place of refuge to all the refractory and licentious Jews, who could not endure the strict administration of the law in Judæa. MILMAN'S HIST. OF THE JEWS, vol. ii, p. 25.

### 3. *Allusion in Genesis to the Babylonish mode of building.*

A remarkable passage, furnishing internal evidence that the Old Testament was written after the Babylonish captivity, occurs in Genesis xi, 3, where the building of the tower of Babel is described:

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\* One would think that no other proof could be wanting, to shew the absurdity of the supposition that the Samaritan Pentateuch is older than the Hebrew. See page 80.

And they said one to another, "Go to, let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly": and they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar.

The last words of this verse are not correctly translated: the Hebrew is,

וַיִּחְמַר הָיָא לָהֶם לַחֲמַר,

and it is observable that the letters *חמר* enter into the composition of the first and last of the four words. The meaning of this trilateral root is threefold, as a verb *to bubble up*, as a noun *bitumen* and *slime* or *clay*. According to the vowel-points the proper translation of the passage is "and bitumen had they for mortar (cement or clay)." What gives particular importance to this passage is the fact that bitumen is found in Mesopotamia or Chaldæa, where it oozes out from the ground and is found floating upon the water. We have this fact on the testimony of Herodotus, who says of a well near Susa, in Book vi, chapter 119 of his History:

Καὶ γὰρ ἄσφαλτον καὶ ἄλας καὶ ἔλαιον ἀρύσσονται ἐξ αὐτοῦ τρόπῳ τοιῷδε· ἀντλῆεται μὲν κηλωνήῳ, ἀντὶ δὲ γανλοῦ ἥμισυ ἄσκού οἱ προσδέεται· ὑποτύψας δὲ τούτῳ ἀντλέει καὶ ἔπειτεν ἐγχείει ἐς δεξάμενῃν· ἐκ δὲ ταύτης ἐς ἄλλο διαχεόμενον τράπεται τριφασίας οδοῦς.

For they draw bitumen and salt and oil out of it, in such manner as this: it is drawn with a pole, to which half a skin is bound instead of a bucket; with this they dip and draw up, and then pour the contents into a receiver: from this it is poured off into another vessel, and turned into three different channels.

Again in Book i, chapter 179, speaking of a river named Is:

Οὗτος ὢν ὁ Ἰς ποταμὸς ἅμα τῷ ὕδατι θρόμβους ἄσφάλτου ἀναδιδόι πολλοὺς, ἔνθεν ἡ ἄσφαλτος ἐς τὸ ἐν Βαβυλῶνι τεῖχος ἐκομίσθη.

This river, the Is, casts up with its water many lumps of bitumen, from whence the bitumen was fetched to build the wall at Babylon.

Thus it appears that the Babylonians used bitumen



for cement in building, and it is well known that they used bricks also, because their country does not produce stone. The writer of the passage in Genesis must have himself seen or heard from others that the Babylonian buildings were constructed of brick and bitumen. The fact described in the text before us is named as something remarkable because different from the customs of the people for whose use it was written. But surely, if this was written just after the Israelites had escaped out of Egypt, it would be more novel for them to hear of stone being used than brick, for the hardship of their own slavery in Egypt had consisted in the compulsory and severely exacted manufacture of this article; and it is most probable that they had never seen or heard of bitumen, and would therefore know nothing about it. But if the text before us was written after the Babylonish captivity, the account would come with propriety from a writer who knew of the remarkable nature of Babylonian architecture, and would be highly intelligible to the readers, as well known to be applicable to Babylon, but not to their own country Judæa.

4. *The expressions* ON THIS SIDE JORDAN, BEYOND JORDAN *examined.*

It has been noticed in page 48 that the expression “on this side Jordan” in Deuteronomy i, 1, has been considered as an indirect testimony that the book, in which it occurs, was written by Moses, because the words denote that the writer was on the eastern side of the river Jordan, and Moses died before the Israelites crossed to the western side of that river. I have also asserted that these words are not correctly rendered in our Bible. The verse Deut. i, 1, is here subjoined, with Dr Shuckford’s observations upon it, shewing that the inaccuracy of our translation in this passage has already occurred to the notice of others:



Deuteronomy i, 1. These be the words which Moses spake unto all Israel on this side Jordan in the wilderness, in the plain over against the Red Sea, between Paran and Tophel, and Laban, and Hazeroth, and Dizahab.

I might here, [*says Dr S.*] answer a trifling cavil offered concerning the Book of Deuteronomy, raised from the words here cited. It is pretended that *be neber ha Jarden*, which we translate *on this side* Jordan, do rather signify *beyond* or *on the other side* Jordan, and consequently, that these words imply Moses not to have wrote the book of Deuteronomy, for that the book so called was wrote by a person who had passed over Jordan, and could, according to the intimation of these words, remark, that the words of Moses were spoke on a different side the river from the place where the book was written. But were there no other, the 10th and 13th verses of the 50th chapter of Genesis are sufficient to shew the word *beneber* to have the signification we take it in. When Joseph went up out of Egypt to bury his father, they journeyed from Goshen into Canaan, and came to the cave of Macpelah before Mamre, in their way to which they stopped at the threshing-flour of Atad *beneber ha Jarden*, not *beyond*, but *on this side* Jordan; for they did not travel into Canaan, so far as to the river Jordan. SHUCKF. CONNECTION v. III, pref. page ix.

Dr Shuckford does not much improve his case by citing a second passage in which the same Hebrew words occur; for his explanation implies that they are wrongly translated in the second passage, if not in the first. The question how we should interpret the Hebrew word in these cases depends on the place where the writer was when he wrote, and on the meaning which he intended to convey. The exact grammatical signification of the word must first be ascertained; and then we may enquire, if any particular circumstances, habits of life, or figure of speech, has in later times modified this meaning.

It appears that our translators have rendered the same Hebrew words *be neber ha Jarden* by two contradictory English expressions. This is an important question, and requires to be fully investigated, for, as our knowledge of the Old Testament is derived, for the great body of our people, from a translation only, it is of vital importance that

the translation of it should be scrupulously accurate and faithful.

The words *be neber ha Jarden* are written in the Hebrew character without points, thus: בעבר הירדן. The first of these words,—or, as we should call it if it were English, the second—for the Hebrew is read from right to left—is compounded of *be* and *neber*. The prefix *be* is a sort of preposition, meaning *in*. The second part of the compound *neber* is thus explained in Dr Winer's Hebrew Lexicon, 8vo Leipzig, 1828, page 690 :

עבר m. 1) regio *ulterior* (*das Jenseitige*) ; עבר הירדן regio *trans-jordanensis* Gen. 50, 10. 11. Deut. 1, 1.

Here we have the very two passages which Dr Shuckford refers to, adduced as illustrations that *neber* means *trans*, “beyond,” and not *on this side*. Our translators, then, have mistranslated one of the verses in question, namely Deut. 1, 1 ; for in the other passage, Gen. 1, 10, the word is rightly rendered “beyond.” It may be inquired, to what source so serious an error is to be ascribed ; for that our translators have intentionally mistranslated the plain sense of any passage in the Old Testament, is not for a moment to be imagined. We shall see, from a collation of other passages where the same word *neber* occurs, that the cause of its mistranslation in one of the passages before us may be traced beyond the reach of doubt.

(1) GENESIS 1, 10. And they came to the threshing-floor of Atad, which is beyond Jordan, and there they mourned with a great and very sore lamentation : and he made a mourning for his father seven days.

(2) NUMBERS xxi, 13. From thence they removed, and pitched on the other side of Arnon, which is in the wilderness that cometh out of the coast of the Amorites : for Arnon is the border of Moab, between Moab and the Amorites.

(3) Deuteronomy i, 1, already given in page 242.

(4) DEUTERONOMY xxx, 13. Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldest say, “Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it and do it?”

(5) Joshua xiv, 3. For Moses had given the inheritance of two tribes and an half tribe on the other side Jordan : but unto the Levites he gave none inheritance among them.

(6) JOSHUA xxiv, 2. 3. And Joshua said unto all the people, "Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood in old time, even Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nachor : and they served other gods. And I took your father Abraham from the other side of the flood, and led him throughout all the land of Canaan, and multiplied his seed, and gave him Isaac."

(7) II Samuel. x, 16. And Hadarezer sent, and brought out the Syrians that were beyond the river : and they came to Helam ; and Shobach the captain of the host of Hadarezer *went* before them.

(8) I Kings iv, 24. For he had dominion over all the region on this side the river, from Tiphseh (*Thapsacus*) even unto Azzah, over all the kings on this side the river : and he had peace on all sides round about him.

(9) I Chron. xxvi, 30. And of the Hebronites, Hashabiah and his brethren, men of valour, a thousand and seven hundred, were officers among them of Israel on this side Jordan westward in all the business of the Lord, and in the service of the king.

(10) EZRA viii, 36. And they delivered the king's commission unto the king's lieutenants, and to the governors on this side the river : and they furthered the people, and the house of God.

(11) NEHEMIAH ii, 7. Moreover I said unto the king " If it please the king, let letters be given me to the governors beyond the river, that they may convey me over till I come into Judah."

(12) ———- iii, 7. And next unto them repaired Melatiah the Gibeonite, and Jadon the Meronothite, the men of Gibeon, and of Mizpah, unto the throne of the governor on this side the river.

(13) ISAIAH vii, 20. In the same day shall the Lord shave with a razor that is hired, *namely*, by them beyond the river, by the king of Assyria, the head and the hair of the feet : and it shall also consume the beard.

In these 13 passages the Hebrew word *neber* is the same ; and in 8 of them it is correctly rendered by the words 'beyond' 'on the other side of' whilst in the other 5, Nos. 3, 8, 9, 10, 12, the same word is wrongly translated *on this side of*.



There can be no doubt that the Hebrew word *neber* communicates to all its compounds the signification of *beyond, further, ulterior, or on the other side of*: and I find a remark in Dr Winer's Hebrew Lexicon which explains the whole difficulty. He observes that the word means usually 'trans Jordanem' *beyond Jordan*, i. e. 'ab oriente Palæstinæ' *on the eastern side from Palestine*; but that in I Chron. xxvi, 36, 'ex seriorum Judæorum usu,' *according to the later practice of the Jews*, it means 'ab occidente Jordanis' *on the western side of Jordan*.

In other words the expression *beyond Jordan* or *beyond the flood* (i. e. the river Euphrates), must obviously convey a different meaning, according to the position of the person speaking or writing: and as a large number of the Israelites were carried to Babylon, where they appear to have emerged from their bondage, and to have gained favour at court, they would then naturally describe their own land Judæa as lying beyond Jordan, whereas in former times Babylon would have been spoken of as lying *beyond*, and Palestine as lying *on this side* Jordan. Let us see how this explanation applies.

In I Kings iv, 24, Solomon is said to have held dominion over all the country on this side the river [the Euphrates *par excellence*]. But Dr Winer says that it ought to be rendered *beyond* the river, for no one doubts that the books of Kings were written after the Babylonish captivity [*libros enim regum post exilium Babylonicum scriptos esse, vix dubitatur*: Cf. DE WETTE, EINLEIT. p. 280.] "But the writer seems to write with reference to the place where he had formerly been, and to use the description to which he had been there accustomed [*Sed videtur scriptor ex eo, in quo ipse constitutus erat, loco rem metiri, vel appellatione tum usu recepta uti*]." We may illustrate this very just remark of Dr Winer by an instance which will be at once familiar to every school-boy. The northern part of Italy was anciently



inhabited by Gauls and called by the Romans Gallia Cisalpina *Gaul on this side the Alps*. The name was appropriate in the mouth of every one living on the same side of the Alps as the country which he was describing. But in process of time foreigners began to call it "Cisalpine Gaul," even though they themselves resided on the other side of the Alps. This then, is precisely the case with the Israelites: their expressions Trans-Jordan, and Trans-euphratean, in early times denoted the eastern, but after the Babylonish captivity, either the eastern or western side of the rivers, according as they retained or abandoned, when they returned to their own country, the new use of the term which they had acquired at Babylon.

We must then restore the word 'beyond' in the five passages before quoted, and every thing becomes consistent and harmonious. It must be determined in each particular case whether the eastern or western side of the river was intended by the writer. I leave the reader to institute this enquiry for himself, only cautioning him to observe that the compilers who united all the original chronicles and fragments, from which the Old Testament is composed, may have retained or altered the word rendered *beyond*, according to their particular notions of propriety or perhaps by pure accident. The use which can be derived to our present enquiry from the foregoing remarks, is the inference that as this confused use of terms originated in the Babylonish Captivity, the Old Testament must have been compiled after or during that Captivity.

5. *The Captivity and Assyria are actually mentioned in the early books of the Old Testament.*

1.

In Numbers xxiv, 21—22, we read :

And he [Balaam] looked on the Kenites, and took up his parable, and said, "Strong is thy dwelling-place, and thou puttest thy nest in a rock. Nevertheless the Kenite shall be wasted, until Asshur shall carry

thee away captive. And ships shall come from the coast of Chittim, and shall afflict Asshur, and shall afflict Eber, and he also shall perish for ever."

### Notes in the Family Bible :

21.—*the Kenites,*] Not one of the Canaanitish nations, mentioned in Gen. xv, 19, but probably a tribe of the Midianites : Jethro the father-in-law of Moses, being called in one place "the priest of Midian," Exod. iii, 1, and in another, "the Kenite," Judges i. 16. *Bp Newton.*

22. *Nevertheless the Kenite &c.*] The Amalekites were to be utterly destroyed, but the Kenites were to be carried captive. And accordingly, when Saul was sent to destroy the Amalekites, he ordered the Kenites to depart from among them, I Sam. xv, 6. This shews that they were "wasted" and reduced to a low and weak condition. And, as the kings of Assyria carried captive, not only the Jews, but also the Syrians, II Kings xvi, 9, and several other nations, II Kings xix, 12, 13, it is highly probable that the Kenites shared the same fate with their neighbours ; especially as some Kenites are mentioned among the Jews after their return from captivity. *Bp. Newton.*

2.

In Deuteronomy, xxix, 25—28, are described the evils which should happen to the Israelites in case of their not observing the law which had been given by Moses :

Then men shall say, "Because they have forsaken the covenant of the Lord God of their fathers, which he made with them when he brought them forth out of the land of Egypt. For they went and served other gods whom they knew not, and whom he had not given unto them. And the anger of the Lord was kindled against this land to bring upon it all the curses that are written in this book. And the Lord rooted them out of their land in anger, and in wrath, and in great indignation, and cast them into another land, as it is this day."

Here is an allusion to the great downfall of the first Israelitish monarchy, too plain to be interpreted as a supposed case, merely, of a misfortune which only *might* befall them, if they should be disobedient to God's commandments. The impression, which the words irresistibly leave on the mind, is that the calamity of defeat and transportation into a strange country had actually befallen them when those words were written.

## CHAPTER 28.

ON THE ART OF WRITING—ITS GRADUAL DEVELOPMENT THROUGH FIVE STAGES—1. MEXICAN PICTURE-WRITING: 2. EGYPTIAN HIEROGLYPHICS: 3. CHINESE WORD-WRITING: 4. HEBREW SYLLABIC OR CONSONANTAL WRITING: 5. ALPHABETIC WRITING.

The changes which are effected by lapse of time in the language of a nation, though partly influenced by external causes, are, nevertheless, partly independent of those causes. Motion is one of the principles of the universe and not merely of human things. Nothing is stationary: the great outlines of the material globe, on which we live, are daily changing; the ocean, which washes the coasts of the solid continents of the earth, is ever fretting and chafing, as if eager to extend its dominion; and, whilst in some parts it has made large encroachments upon the land, it has in other places receded before its enemy: so that, whilst ships now sail over an expanse of water where the husbandmen formerly drove his plough, we may elsewhere gather fruit and flowers, where in bygone ages the sailor steered his ship.

Man is subject to the same physical laws as the creation which surrounds him. Through the long period of authentic history, no nation has retained for two hundred years all the original elements of its constitution. Its language, as well as almost all other features, has submitted to the law of change. The life of even one man is long enough to furnish instances of this law. New fashions arise, whether of dress, gait, speech, pronunciation or writing, which draw after them the imitation of buoyant and fickle youth, whilst they, as surely, bring down the

reprobation of the old, who think nothing right or good, but what themselves did when they were boys.

*laudator temporis acti*

*Se puero.*

Novelty is a constant charm. "Did Ennius or Lucilius enrich the native tongue of Latium by the introduction of new words, and shall Horace be the object of the public execration because he coined a few fresh words, which before his time were unknown?" The law of finality must be abandoned, both by the politician and the philosopher. It must also be abandoned by the historian; for whoever casts his figures, of different countries and of ages far remote, in the same mould, will find that his imitations present a strong likeness to one another, but are very imperfect representations of the originals.

If however, notwithstanding these observations, we can suppose any people in the world to have retained the use of the same language so completely, that a book written nearly a thousand years ago, could be still read to the people by their priests and teachers, so as to be understood by the audience, the people selected to illustrate this permanence of language could not be the Israelites, who, as we have seen in former chapters, went through most remarkable and continual vicissitudes.

I shall devote the present chapter to an inquiry into the origin of the Art of Writing, and especially of Alphabetic writing, by the help of which alone we have obtained almost all the knowledge that we possess both of former times and of our own species.

The art of writing is the most noble that mankind have yet acquired. It enables persons residing in remote quarters of the world, to communicate their thoughts to one another with no more delay than the time necessary for transmitting the vehicle to which those thoughts are



consigned. It also furnishes the means of handing down the history of past ages to the most distant posterity, and so of accumulating, for the benefit of each succeeding generation, all the wisdom which their predecessors have laid up.

Yet the origin of this art, so wonderful for its results, and so useful to mankind in the daily business of life, is utterly lost in obscurity, though it has been often investigated with all that profound sagacity of which men are capable, when they apply the powers of their intellect to a specific subject of enquiry.

It is perhaps vain to hope that it will ever be discovered to whom mankind is indebted for the invention of this wonderful art: because, the name of the inventor not having been recorded, no stretch of intellect can supply the absence of what is evidently a matter of fact, until some fresh documents shall be discovered, which may help us to elucidate the difficulty.

It has been maintained by some authors that the art of alphabetic writing was first given to mankind by an immediate revelation from God. Among those who hold this theory may be mentioned Dr Wall, the learned professor of Hebrew at the University of Dublin. In a work\* published within a few years on this subject, he has propounded an opinion that the knowledge of Alphabetical Characters was first communicated by God, through Moses, to the Israelites at the time of the promulgation of the Hebrew Law. And the learned author lays for the basis of this conclusion the fact that the inhabitants of Egypt,

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\* An examination of the ancient orthography of the Jews, and of the original state of the text of the Hebrew Bible. Part the First, containing an Inquiry into the origin of Alphabetic Writing; with which is incorporated an essay on the Egyptian Hieroglyphics. By C. W. Wall, D. D. senior fellow of Trinity College, and professor of Hebrew in the University of Dublin, Royal 8vo London 1835.

where alone the Israelites could, by human means, have previously learnt the art of alphabetic writing, did not possess that art, until long after Moses and the delivery of the Law. I accept the premises which the learned professor has laid down, and with much learning established, but I deny his conclusion, because a better and more rational conclusion seems to follow, namely that the Hebrew law was not given by Moses, in alphabetic writing, at all.

If then we reject the theory, that alphabetic writing was given by immediate revelation to mankind, this art must be supposed to have proceeded from the natural talents of the human race gradually, from small beginnings, elaborating the invention until it has at length attained to its present state of perfection. It remains to be shewn that existing facts strongly corroborate this view, and that no other view is compatible with these facts.

There can be little doubt [*says the author of the Celtic Researches*] that the primitive ages possessed some means, beside oral tradition, of recording and perpetuating their several branches of knowledge, but respecting the nature of these means, we are left some what in the dark. It is universally allowed that no human device could have answered this purpose better than alphabetic writing. PAGE 34. •

But it is not necessary that this art should have existed in several of the ancient nations ; for

In the back settlements of America we find men accommodated like savages, but informed as members of civil society ; and in ancient authors we read of sages, of no mean fame, residing amongst rude and barbarous nations. CELTIC RES. p. 114.

The art of writing, however excellent, is no more than *one* of the numerous arts by which the life of man is embellished and improved, and it is possible for a people to attain to a high state of advancement in many respects, whilst its individuals may be able neither to read nor write.

We are too apt to attach the idea of barbarism to those who are ignorant of the art of reading and writing, forgetting that some of our own kings, and almost all our nobility in former times, knew nothing of either the one or the other. Perhaps a just idea of this subject may be formed by saying that a nation ignorant of the use of letters, can progress in civilization only to that point which the life of one man can attain to, because the use of letters alone can enable a nation to store up the successive and accumulated wisdom of several lives.\*

Yet if we take the most simple and untutored people that History has made us acquainted with, we shall find that they have some mode of conveying their thoughts, analogous, though infinitely inferior, to alphabetic writing.

\* The Germans, in the age of Tacitus, were unacquainted with the use of letters ; and the use of letters is the principal circumstance that distinguishes a civilized people from a herd of savages incapable of knowledge or reflection. Without that artificial help, the human memory soon dissipates or corrupts the ideas intrusted to her charge ; and the nobler faculties of the mind, no longer supplied with models or with materials, gradually forget their powers ; the judgment becomes languid and lethargic, the imagination languid or irregular. Fully to apprehend this important truth, let us attempt, in an improved society, to calculate the immense distance between the man of learning and the illiterate peasant. The former, by reading and reflection, multiplies his own experience and lives in distant ages and remote countries, whilst the latter, rooted to a single spot, and confined to a few years of existence, surpasses, but very little, his fellow-labourer the ox in the exercise of his mental faculties. The same, and even a greater, difference will be found between nations than between individuals, and we may safely pronounce, that without some species of writing, no people has ever preserved the faithful annals of their history, ever made any considerable progress in the abstract sciences, or ever possessed, in any tolerable degree of perfection, the useful and agreeable arts of life. GIBBON, chap. ix, vol. I, p. 352 of the 12 vol. edit. London 18. 2.

\* Tacitus, Germ. ii, 19. *Litterarum secreta viri pariter ac feminae ignorant.* We may rest contented with this decisive authority, without entering into the obscure disputes concerning the antiquity of the Runic characters. The learned Celsius, a Swede, a scholar, and a philosopher, was of opinion, that they were nothing more than the Roman letters, with the curves changed into straight lines for the ease of engraving. See Pelloutier, *Histoire des Celtes*, l. ii, c. 11. *Dictionnaire Diplomatique*, tom. i, p. 223. We may add, that the oldest Runic inscriptions are supposed to be of the third century, and the most ancient writer who mentions the Runic characters is Venantius Fortunatus (*Carm. vii, 18*), who lived towards the end of the sixth century.



1. *Mexican Picture-writing.*

The first attempts of a people to convey to a distance, or to deliver down to a future age, the knowledge of an event, would obviously be to draw a picture of that event with all its circumstances, delineated, as they presented themselves to the eyes of the narrator ; and this mode has, no doubt, been practised in every nation of the earth. It is, indeed, practised at present in every country, where books are printed, as being the only mode in which many subjects, treated of in those books, can be faithfully and satisfactorily described. *Pictures* are still used for such purposes, where written language would fail, though pictures are now used only as subordinate to letters, whereas in certain nations, that have come to our knowledge, PICTURE-WRITING has been the only mode of conveying the information which now is transmitted by means of alphabetical characters. That this is not a mere theory may be shewn by the instance of the Mexicans, who, when invaded by Cortes in the sixteenth century, possessed no alphabetic writing at all, but made use of pictures taken on the spot, to describe to their king in his capital city, the nature of the foreigners who had landed in his coasts, their ships, their arms, accoutrements, and general appearance. The effect which these pictures produced on the minds of those who had not seen the Spanish invaders, was, no doubt, the same as that which would be conveyed to the mind of a Frenchman, on entering the Gallery of Battles (*Salle des Batailles*) at Versailles, by the large pictures of the battles of Wagram, Austerlitz, and others, which are there suspended. If all historical records of Mexico on the one hand, or of France on the other, were destroyed, and these pictures alone were preserved, they would still tell the story of those events though without that vividness of detail, or identification of nation, which could only be obtained from collateral sources.



## 2. *Hieroglyphics.*

The incompleteness of such Picture-writing would suggest itself sooner or later to those who practised it, according to their capacity for carrying arts to perfection. The Mexicans do not appear to have ever advanced beyond this first stage in what may be termed the literary art, and this is a strong argument against the supposed antiquity of the Mexican nation. There are certain stages, through which, more or less, all nations must pass, and a people, that have not advanced beyond picture-writing, have made but one step at all in the road of improvement. We must turn to Egypt for the next step, and there we find traces of the more advanced species of writing which is generally denominated HIEROGLYPHICS.

To understand aright the peculiar characters which pass under this name, we must not lose sight of the antecedent Picture-writing, from which Hieroglyphics sprang. The original delineation of a battle would, as we have seen, be but imperfectly understood to the next generation, and the picture would in process of time require the aid of an interpreter to explain all its various circumstances and details. The question then was in what manner could certain symbols be placed in connection, one with another, so as to represent a train of ideas, descriptive of certain subjects, which those who possessed the key to this system, could understand? This question occurred to the ancient Egyptians, and they solved it by choosing a series of emblems, mostly objects of common occurrence in their country, and attaching to these objects a certain meaning which should always be the same under the same circumstances, and so was formed the celebrated Hieroglyphical system of the Ægyptians. The long duration of the Egyptian culture has furnished us with the most satisfactory proof that this statement of the origin of Hierogly-

phics is correct; for in Egypt are preserved not only immense numbers of such inscriptions; but also of fresco paintings, evidently wrought for the purpose of handing down to posterity the knowledge of certain great events. By which means we have, in the same country, instances of both the earliest kinds of writing, namely the Hieroglyphical, and the Pictorial from which the former is an offshoot.

But, it must be admitted, after all, with sorrow, that the Hieroglyphics, however they may be an improvement on Picture writing, to those who possess the key of the system, yet to us who have no clue, or a weak one, to the interpretation of them, they are as obscure as the Picture-writing from which they first arose.

It must not, however, be inferred that modern ingenuity has been altogether baffled in its attempt to decipher the Egyptian Hieroglyphies. The key has not been altogether lost, for the meaning of some of their symbols has been preserved by ancient authors. One instance of this may suffice; it is the famous passage of Clemens Alexandrinus who lived at the beginning of the third century of the Christian æra. His words are these:

*Ναὶ μὴν καὶ ἐν Διοσπόλει τῆς Αἰγύπτου, ἐπὶ τοῦ ἱεροῦ καλουμένου Πυλῶνος, διατετύπεται παιδίον μὲν, γενέσεως σύμβολον · φθορᾶς δὲ, ὁ γέρων · Θεοῦ τε αὖ, ὁ ἱέραξ · ὡς ὁ ἰχθὺς, μίσους · καὶ, κατ' ἄλλο πάλιν σημαινόμενον, ὁ κροκόδειλος, ἀναιδείας · φαίνεται τοίνυν συντιθέμενον τὸ πᾶν σύμβολον, δηλωτικὸν εἶναι τοῦδε · “Ὁ γιγνόμενοι καὶ ἀπογιγνόμενοι, Θεὸς μισεῖ ἀναιδείαν.”* STROM. lib. v, p. 413. ed. Heinsii.

At Diospolis in Egypt, on the temple called Pylon, is sculptured, a boy, the emblem of birth; an old man, the emblem of death; the hawk, an emblem of God, and a fish, that of hatred; and a crocodile (having here a different meaning from that which I before named for it) the emblem of impudence. The whole then put together symbolically seems to me to mean “O you who are born, and you who die, God hates impudence.”

It has been properly observed of such hieroglyphical

inscriptions, that the want of connecting particles makes it difficult to ascertain their exact meaning. Thus the five figures, a boy, an old man, a hawk, a fish, and a crocodile, may have other meanings, besides that which Clemens Alexandrinus has assigned to them, though the five prevailing ideas would be repeated in all. For example, they may mean, "young and old may become Gods by hating impudence." This, it must be admitted, is a serious defect in the system of Hieroglyphics, though it is equally evident that they shew a great advance from the more ancient and simple mode of Picture-writing.\*

### 3. *Word-Writing.*

I proceed to speak of the third distinct species of writing, which, though emanating from the former, has certain marks peculiar to itself, or at least common to those other

\* The following observations of Dr Warburton on this subject, are well adapted to convey a good notion of the general nature of Hieroglyphics and the manner in which they were used, though there are other parts of his account (not here quoted) which are far from accurate :

"The inconveniences attending the too great bulk of the volume in writings of this kind [PICTURE-WRITING] would soon set the more ingenious and better civilized people upon contriving methods to abridge their characters: and of all the improvements of this kind, that which was invented by the Egyptians, and called Hieroglyphics, was by far the most celebrated. By this contrivance, that writing, which amongst the Mexicans was only a simple painting, became in Egypt a pictural character. This abridgment was of three kinds; and, as appears from the more or less art employed in the contrivance of each, made by due degrees, and at three different periods.

1. The first way was to MAKE THE PRINCIPAL CIRCUMSTANCE IN THE SUBJECT STAND FOR THE WHOLE. Thus, when they would describe a battle, or two armies in array, they painted (as we learn from that admirable fragment of antiquity, the hieroglyphics of Horapollo) TWO HANDS, ONE HOLDING A SHIELD, THE OTHER A BOW; when a tumult, or popular insurrection, AN ARMED MAN CASTING ARROWS; when a siege, A SCALING LADDER. This was of the utmost simplicity; and, consequently, we must suppose it the earliest way of turning painting into an hieroglyphic, that is, making it a picture-character .....

2. The second and more artful method of contraction, was, by PUTTING THE INSTRUMENT OF THE THING, WHETHER REAL OR METAPHORICAL, FOR THE THING ITSELF. Thus an EYE, eminently placed, was designed to represent God's omniscience; an EYE AND SCEPTRE, to represent a monarch; a SWORD, their cruel enemy Ochus; and a SHIP AND PILOT, the governor of the universe .....

3. Their third, and still more artificial method of abridging picture-writing, was, BY MAKING ONE THING TO STAND FOR, OR REPRESENT ANOTHER, WHERE ANY QUAIN RESEMBLANCE, OR ANALOGY, IN THE REPRESENTATIVE, COULD BE COLLECTED FROM THEIR OBSERVATION OF NATURE OR THEIR TRADITIONAL SUPERSTITIONS.



kinds of writing, which have sprung out of it. According to this mode, every word, representing a separate idea, is expressed by a single character. This kind of writing exists still, though much modified and improved, among the Chinese. In all the languages of China Proper the word for *man*, is represented in writing by a certain character, which all the inhabitants of the country recognize to mean the same thing, though in the different dialects, the words, when uttered by the mouth, sound decidedly and essentially different. The nature of this system may be easily illustrated by a similar mode which prevails among ourselves. The Arabic numerals 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 0, and the Roman numerals I, II, III, IV, &c as well as the Greek,  $\alpha$ ,  $\beta$ ,  $\gamma$ , &c. are well known in all the nations of the world; though in every different country, the word or name by which each of these is pronounced, is entirely different, yet the idea which these signs convey to the mind is essentially the same.

There are evidently great advantages in this mode, over the Hieroglyphical which preceded; for in Hieroglyphics, as far as we yet understand them, there were no means of denoting many particles and minor words of a sentence, which are yet necessary to make the meaning pointed and definite. But in word-writing, according to which it is not necessary that there should be any symbolical analogy between the word, or idea, and the character expressing it, there is no reason why prepositions, conjunctions, and every inflection of noun or verb may not have its representative in the written sentence. I do not mean to deny that the written characters were first chosen from some fancied similarity to the object represented by them. It is most probable that they *were* chosen for this reason, and thus they shew the third stage in the art of writing, rising as naturally out of the second, as that had before arisen from the first. There is also another peculia-



rity in this system of word-writing, which in certain cases might be particularly advantageous. It has been shewn that persons speaking different languages might use the same books, in the same way as Englishmen and Frenchmen use the same books of arithmetical tables, containing nothing but figures, which, though pronounced differently, are understood by all alike. It is evident, however, that this advantage would not be found in the case of languages, where the words of a sentence are placed in a different order, or where a larger number of words go to make up the same idea in one than another, or where the ideas are differently divided between the words.

The Chinese are the only people among whom this kind of writing is known, and the general disadvantages of it are most signal. As every word has a separate character, a person who has never before seen any particular word written, is unable to complete the sentence until he has obtained the sense of that word. The difficulty is certainly lessened by the circumstance of the Chinese having only between two and three hundred simple monosyllabic sounds, represented each by a separate character ; and out of those simple elements their other words and characters are compounded. Still the difficulty of mastering the language of books in China is found so great that their literature is very inferior, because the study of years is necessary to enable a man to read.

#### 4. *Syllabic or consonantal writing in use among the Hebrews.*

At the point which we have now reached, a new and important principle has been introduced into the art, whose progress is here delineated. The original similarity between the symbol and the object represented, either no longer exists or is at all events no longer essential. In the two preceding systems of Picture-writing and Hieroglyphics ;

the characters employed were ideagraphic, i. e. descriptive of the ideas which the words they represented implied, and consequently could not be chosen at discretion, but in the third stage of the art, *word-writing*, the symbols, though partly still, and especially in their origin, ideagraphic, yet in process of time had partly lost this character, for they no longer presented an appearance analogous to the objects and ideas represented. According to this system every sound, which the human voice could express, had now its peculiar emblem, and those who were acquainted with a given number of these characters, could make use of them in writing, as far as the very extensive system of arithmetic combination will allow.

These three methods of writing seem to have sprung naturally, the third from the second, and the second from the first. But the next improvement which was made in this art, was far more important. The necessity of learning new characters for every new word was still a burden and an impediment. By a happy thought it was successfully vanquished. Words were resolved into their first elements, and syllabic or CONSONANTAL WRITING was invented. It was found that about twenty characters denote all the consonantal sounds which the human voice can ordinarily express. The number naturally varied in different countries, but the principle was gained, and its development was simple and easy. It is universally admitted that the old Hebrews used this mode of writing, consisting wholly of consonants, which were pronounced by inserting a vowel sound between them. It is true that it might be difficult to know what vowel sound should in every case be inserted between the written consonants: this was left for the reader to supply by his knowledge of the language. Thus the first word in the Hebrew Bible being composed of the consonants B, R, S, T, might be pronounced *Barasat*, *bereset*, *birisit*, *borosot*, *burusut*, and in twenty other

ways, according to the combinations of the letters a, e, i, o, and u. Still the sounds do not greatly differ from one another, and a person who understood the Hebrew language well would have no difficulty, arising from this cause, in reading any book that might be placed before him. When however the Jews, in later ages, came into contact with other nations, and their language became corrupted from its purity, they seem to have been sensible of some inconvenience from their old mode of writing : hence arose those diacritical points and other contrivances, which like the accents and breathings of the Greek Grammarians, have for ever puzzled and rendered intricate — now that the Greek and Hebrew are dead languages, — that which they were at first intended to explain.

5. *Alphabetical Writing, as used by the Greeks and other ancient and modern nations.*

The last step in this progressive art was now to be made : to insert vowels between the consonants of which the Hebrew tongue consisted. When this was done, the art of ALPHABETIC WRITING was attained : the gulf which writers are pleased to describe as existing between the literate and the illiterate state was now for ever closed. First the Greeks, afterwards the Romans, and, following them, all the present nations of the earth have adopted this noble art ; and even the Chinese have, in writing foreign names, been obliged to conform in part to a system which prevails over all the rest of the world.

It remains for future ages to determine whether in the universe of mind and matter other improvements of this art remain still to be made. It is useless to dive into the future, let us rather enquire into the past, if by chance we may discover any data which will further illustrate the particular subject of this work.



## NOTE :

The following extract from Dr Wall's Inquiry into the origin of alphabetic writing will serve to make the present subject more intelligible.

“The characters employed in writing are of two kinds : 1. Images, or resemblances of external visible objects ; 2. Arbitrary marks. Each of these again may be subdivided into two kinds, according as the application of them is direct or metaphorical. However the subdivision of arbitrary marks is less noticed, because both applications of them are arbitrary, and the metaphor does not strike our imagination as strongly in the use of these, as it does when the signs of the first kind are employed. Hence the most usual distribution at present made of the characters used in the ideographic branch of the art, is into three kinds : 1. Images employed as signs of those things of which they are imitations ; 2. Images metaphorically transferred to being signs of other things ; 3. Arbitrary marks. And, *pari passu*, the writing admitted to have been invented by man may be distinguished into three sorts, according to the predominance in it of one or other of these three kinds of characters.

The origin of the invention, in its most general aspect, may, it is obvious, be traced to the natural desire of man to give a permanence to the expression of his thoughts, so as to render them communicable to those separated from him by distance of time or place ....

As writing commenced with the representation of our ideas of things by their likenesses, or by mimetic characters, so the drawing of these constituted the most obvious and natural, as well as the first, step in the progress of the art.

One of the earliest intellectual efforts of an ingenious child will be found to be an attempt to delineate the visible objects that have most forcibly arrested his attention. He does not indeed sketch the outlines of these with any ulterior end in view, but is merely led to the occupation by the pleasure he immediately derives from it. However this very pleasure shows the aptitude of the human faculties to such occupation, and the tendency of the mind to exert its energies in this way. Accordingly the use of mimetic writing spread widely over the earth ; and specimens of it have been found in various parts of the new world as well as of the old : in countries so situated that their inhabitants could not possibly have had any mutual intercourse, but must each separately and independently have arrived at the invention. Traces of this kind of writing have also



been met with, where the circumstances were least favourable to making the acquisition, even among nations the most civilized, and in regions the most desolate; they were observed by Charlevoix among the savages of North America,\* and by Stahlenberg in the wilds of Siberia. † ” pp. 6—8.

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\* “ Quant aux caractères, ils n'en avaient point : et ils y suppléaient par des espèces d'hiéroglyphes.”--CHARLEVOIX, *Journal d'un voyage dans Amerique Septentrionale*, 4to ed. vol. iii, p. 198.

† “ Bishop Warburton, in his treatise on Hieroglyphs, states that mimetic characters were found by Stahlenberg, graven upon rocks, in the province of Permia, and near the river Jenesci,” that is, on the confines of Siberia, and also in the heart of the country : and he has given a drawing of the characters from that writer.--London ed. of 1811, vol. iv, p. 119. As I have not had access to the original work, I insert the fact in my text on the authority of the bishop.

## CHAPTER 29.

ALPHABETIC WRITING UNKNOWN TO THE EGYPTIANS AND  
CONSEQUENTLY, TO MOSES.

In developping the gradual formation of the present system of writing through the five stages mentioned in the last chapter, I have rather followed an ideal than a real connection between those stages, for it would be difficult to point out any nation in the world, among whom they have all existed in succession. Great improvements are generally slow in their growth, unless the people, who undergo them are acted upon by some external causes. The change from Picture-writing to Hieroglyphics would probably be easy to an intelligent and improving people; and from Hieroglyphics to the Word-writing of the Chinese, the transition was, probably, scarcely less obvious. But from these ideagraphic modes to the purely arbitrary and phonetic system which we call Alphabetic Writing, the interval is wide, and it cannot be proved that any nation has ever, by its own internal impulses, been able to pass it.\* The case of the Chinese is a living proof of the truth of the principle; until they abandon the cumbrous system

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\* Une seconde cause de confusion fut les figures matérielles elles-mêmes par lesquelles on peignit d'abord les pensées, et qui, sous le nom d'HIÉROGLYPHES ou CARACTERES SACS, furent la première invention de l'esprit. Ainsi, pour avertir de L'INONDATION et du besoin de s'en préserver, l'on avait peint une NACELLE, le NAVIRE Argo; pour designer le VENT, l'on avait peint une AILE D'OISEAU; pour specifier la SAISON, le MOIS, l'on avait peint L'OISEAU de PASSAGE, l'INSECTE, l'ANIMAL qui apparaissait à cette époque; pour exprimer l'HIVER, on peignit un PORC,

of inventing or combining a fresh character for every new word,—which is the plan they now follow,—and reduce all their vocabulary to a limited number of arbitrary elements similar to our letters, we may assert with confidence that their literature, whilst it increases in extent, will not equally increase in usefulness; but will ultimately become too cumbersome to answer any useful purpose whatever, until it sinks beneath its own weight.

But I have asserted that there is a wide chasm between the last stage of ideagraphic writing, and the nearest form of a written language that has arbitrary symbols. Let us then see what is the case with the Egyptians—for they alone of the three ideagraphic nations, by their connection with the Hebrews, concern the present enquiry. In this part of the subject, I am happy to find my views confirmed by so able a judge as Dr Wall; and shall therefore make an extract from his learned work concerning the difficulty which attends the later stages, as I have before described, in carrying the art of writing to perfection.

The ideagraphic system of the Chinese has been now, and that of the Egyptians was formerly, such a length of time in use, that it can be hardly expected that any specimens of the primitive [i.e. pictural] writing of either nation should be still extant; though, from the extreme durability of the materials employed in Egypt, it is possible that some of her earlier records may have survived the ravages of time.\* In America, however, at the time of its discovery by the Spaniards, all the writing

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un SERPENT, qui se plaisent dans les LIEUX HUMIDES; et la réunion des figures avait des sens CONVENUS de phrases et de mots. Mais comme ce sens ne portait par lui même rien de fixe et de précis; comme le nombre de ces figures et de leurs combinaisons devint excessif, et surchargea la mémoire, il en resulta d'abord des confusions, des explications fausses. Ensuite le genie ayant inventé l'art plus simple d'appliquer les signes aux sons, dont le nombre est limité, et de peindre la parole au lieu des pensées, L'ECRITURE ALPHABETIQUE fit tomber en désuétude les PEINTURES HIEROGLYPHIQUES; et, de jour en jour, leurs significations oubliées donnèrent lieu à une foule d'illusions, d'équivoques, et d'erreurs. VOLNEY, Œuvres Choisis, page 183, ed. Paris. 8vo 1842.

\* “ Among the Egyptian legends of which the originals or copies have been

was of the first grade, so that no species of it could have been of very ancient origin. That of the Mexicans was decidedly the best, though the Peruvians had made a greater progress in arbitrary signs. To register events they employed *Quipos*, or branches of trees with strings tied to them, which were variously coloured and knotted; and Acosta maintained, that by the different combinations of colours and knots they could express their thoughts as fully and accurately as we can by means of letters.\* But there is strong reason to think, as Robertson, in his History of America, has justly remarked, that the Spanish jesuit was mistaken in the estimate he had formed of the utility and perfection of these Quipos, and that they were little better than numerical scores, the knots indicating numbers; and the colours, the subjects

brought to Europe, there may be observed groups of images, whether mimetic or metaphoric, with writing of a different kind placed in vertical lines over their heads. Even some of the specimens given by Champollion in his *Précis*, appear to be of this nature, and it is likely that many such could be pointed out by any one who had access to the *DESCRIPTION DE L' EGYPTÉ*. The apparent difference of the writing in these renders it probable, that the time of making the insculptures was also different; and that the probability would approach almost to a certainty, if the records were even near so old as M. Champollion supposed. If that were really the case, the mimetic characters of the groups must have been originally pictural, and in process of time, when the art had improved, the other writing was superadded to supply the deficiencies of expression in the older style. What corroborates this view of the nature of the legends in question is, that Clemens of Alexandria, in his very remarkable account of the hieroglyphic system of the Egyptians, mentions a DIRECT MIMETIC kind of writing [*ἡ μὲν κυριολογεῖται κατὰ μίμησιν*], i. e. a PICTURAL kind. Now it is to be observed that it is not of pictural CHARACTERS he there speaks, but of pictural WRITING, in which of course those characters must have predominated, and, if specimens of such writing existed in his day, the most probable way of accounting for their disappearance would seem to be that above suggested."

\* "Son quipos unos memoriales, o registros hachos de ramales, en que diversos nudos, y diversas colores significan diversas cosas. Es increyble lo que en este modo alcançaron; porque quanto los libros pueden dezir de historias, y leyes, y ceremonias, y cuentas de negocios, todo esso suplen los Quipos tan puntualmente que admira.—Porque para diversos generos, como de guerra, de gobierno, de tributos de ceremonias, de tierras, avia diversos Quipos o ramales; y en cada manojo destos, tantos nudos, y nudicos, y hilillos atados: unos colorados: otros verdes: otros azules: otros blancos: y finalmente tantas differentius, que assi como nosotros de veynte quatro letras, guisando las in diferentes maneras, sacamus tanta infinidad de vocablos, assi estos de sus nudos y colores sacavan innumerables significaciones de cosas."—ACOSTA, lib. vi, cap. 9.



to which the reckoning was applied. Besides, the signs under consideration not being drawn or insculpted upon any surface, the registers formed of them could not, except in a very loose sense of the word, be called *writing*. The pictural characters of the Peruvians were better entitled to that denomination, but they were very gross and imperfect. In such characters the Mexicans had greatly the superiority, and interspersed among these they employed other graphic figures of an arbitrary kind to represent objects of thought not perceptible to the sight. Still their writing could only be considered as an improved species of the first grade, for the prominent feature of it was picture representation of events.¶

Where men have not advanced beyond this first stage of the art, they readily exchange it for alphabetic writing, when they come within reach of that very superior method of communication; what they have had no great difficulty in acquiring, they do not particularly prize, and it is at once given up for a better system. But the case is very different with respect to those nations, which had proceeded through the different grades of ideagraphy to its final state, before they got an opportunity of making the exchange in question: the more cumbrous and difficult of acquirement their several systems have proved to be, with so much the greater obstinacy will they be found to have clung to them. In fact it is a very general principle of our nature to value things, not so much by their intrinsic worth, as by the difficulty of acquirement, even when that difficulty is in itself a proof of imperfection. National pride and prejudice also enlist themselves in favour of an old established practice associated with the earliest recollections of a people, and render the mind averse to instituting a fair inquiry into the merits of a foreign system. But besides the common causes of undue bias which must have equally affected the Egyptians and Chinese, separate ones may also

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¶ “A splendid collection of the Mexican Hieroglyphs has been published in London, 1830, in seven folio volumes. The name of Augustine Aglio is that selected for the title page; which appears rather strange, if it be true that the materials were collected and the engravings executed under the direction and at the expence of Lord Viscount Kingsborough. It is said that the publication cost his Lordship near thirty thousand pounds; and the credit of the undertaking is very generally given to him, not only here, but also on the continent. In Paris M. Klaproth, I perceive, dedicated his *Examen Critique* (of the hieroglyphic labours of the late M. Champollion) to this munificent patron of the arts.

be assigned. That which peculiarly operated on the former people was superstition; and how powerful an influence it exerted in the continuation of their unwieldy method, is evident from this consideration,—that they could not have been entirely ignorant of the great superiority of alphabetic writing: as a conquered people they must have become acquainted with much of its nature, and of the advantage of adopting it, at all events from the commencement of the Ptolemean Dynasty; and yet five hundred years after this knowledge had been forced upon them, Clemens Alexandrinus speaks of the different species of Egyptian ideagraphy, intermixed indeed with a phonetic use of signs, as still practised in his day. The characters of their principal kind of writing they connected in some way with religion, and called them sacred; in consequence of which they never gave up the use of them, or adopted a mode of writing purely alphabetical, until they changed their creed.\* It was on account of these characters having been originally confined to religious uses, and insculped in stone, that the Greeks distinguished them by a name implying both particulars, and called them *hieroglyphs*; but the word is now taken in a more general sense, and applied to ideographs of every kind, without reference to either the use made, the surface on which they are drawn, or the country they are found in.

Of the natural tendency of the mind to the first species of writing, some proofs have been already given; and an additional one is, I conceive, supplied by man's frequent recurrence to it after all necessity for the expedient had ceased;

Naturam expellas furca, tamen usque recurret.

Thus, at the present day, there are primers filled with prints or imperfect delineations of the transactions described in their texts; the imagination being thereby called in to the assistance of the judgment to help the young and illiterate to understand writing of a more artificial construction. And in former times when reading was a far more difficult operation than it now is, there was a still more general application of pictural characters to this purpose. In order, therefore, to judge of

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\* "Although Clemens includes the employment of hieroglyphs as letters in his account of the different kinds of Egyptian writing, yet he does not make mention of any kind purely alphabetic. The Egyptians, therefore, had no such writing till after his age, and the oldest they could have had was the Græco-Coptic. But all the remains of this writing which have come down to our times, were evidently the productions of Christians."

the antiquity of an Egyptian record by the appearance in it of such characters, there is a caution to be observed. Should they be found, in a large proportion, in the body of an insculpture, the hieroglyphs would be of the very oldest kind; but when they occur, not in the text, but in accompanying tablets, that is, when they are introduced, not from necessity, but merely for illustration, they are then compatible with writing of a much more recent date. Accordingly, they appear in this way in great numbers of rolls of papyrus, which, though probably the very oldest MSS. now extant, were yet written at a time when Egyptian ideagraphy had arrived at the most advanced stage of its improvement.

It has been inferred by Dr Wall that the ancient Egyptians never advanced beyond the ideagraphic system of writing, which we call Hieroglyphics. If so, the Israelites, at the Exode, had no knowledge of what we now term written characters, but only of Hieroglyphics, such as they had seen in Egypt. Whatever, therefore, Moses wrote must have been written in hieroglyphics; the two tables of stone were written in hieroglyphics, and consequently the Book of the law, or the Pentateuch, must have been compiled in a later age. The truth of these deductions will of course depend on the soundness of the premises, that the writing of the ancient Egyptians was not alphabetic, but consisted of hieroglyphics only.

To investigate this subject fully, would require more time and space than the limits of this work allow; and yet the conclusion to which the premises lead, is so important, that the subject cannot altogether be dismissed without consideration. I shall therefore endeavour to arrange as intelligibly as possible, the reasons which lead to the inference that the art of alphabetic writing was unknown to the ancient Egyptians until about the year 700 before the Christian era.

1. *Positive testimony of ancient authors to a peculiar character of writing among the Egyptians.*

The most early historian who has written about the



ancient Ægyptians is Herodotus ; but it unfortunately happens that his notice of their system of writing is remarkably brief. In the 36th chapter of the second book of his History is the following passage :

Γράμματα γράφουσι καὶ λογίζουσι ψήφασι, "Ἕλληνες μὲν ἀπὸ τῶν ἀριστερων ἐπὶ τὰ δεξιὰ φέροντες τὴν χεῖρα, Αἰγύπτιοι δὲ ἀπὸ τῶν δεξιῶν ἐπὶ τὰ ἀριστερά· καὶ ποιεῦντες ταῦτα αὐτοὶ μὲν φασὶ ἐπὶ δεξιὰ ποιέειν, "Ἕλληνας δὲ ἐπ' ἀριστερά. Διφασίοισι δὲ γράμμασι χρέονται, καὶ τὰ μὲν αὐτῶν ἱερὰ, τὰ δὲ δημοτικὰ καλέεται.

The Greeks write letters and calculate with balls [*probably the abacus*] guiding the hand from left to right, but the Egyptians from right to left : and, doing this, they argue that it is they who do it to the right, and the Greeks to the left. They use two kinds of characters, one of which is called the " sacred," the other the " common character."

Nothing can be gathered from these words, to decide the question whether the Egyptians used ideagraphic or alphabetic writing. We learn no more than that they wrote from right to left and had two kinds of writing, but it is not said that these kinds differed in principle, the one from the other.

In the Historical Library of Diodorus Siculus, who lived 400 years after Herodotus, is the following passage :

Παιδεύουσι δὲ τοὺς υἱοὺς οἱ μὲν ἱερεῖς γράμματα διττὰ, τὰ τε ἱερὰ καλούμενα καὶ τὰ κοινοτέραν ἔχοντα τὴν μάθησιν. [I, 81.]

The Egyptians teach their children two kinds of letters, those called sacred, and those of a more popular nature.

The Latin historian Tacitus lived about 80 years after Diodorus. A passage which occurs in his annals, book ix, chap. 14, certainly seems to shew that the writer considered the Egyptian writing to be ideagraphic.

" Primi per figuras animalium Ægyptii sensus mentis effingebant (ea antiquissima monumenta memoriæ humanæ impressa saxis cernuntur) ; et literarum semet inventores perhibent."

The Egyptians, first of mankind, represented the thoughts of the mind



by means of the figures of animals (those most ancient monuments of man's remembrance which may still be seen, engraven on the rocks); and they give out that they were the inventors of letters.

Of what letters? it may be asked. Of the letters which the historian had mentioned, namely the figures of animals which in Egypt were made to discharge the offices of letters. The latter part of the sentence explains the former, unless it is supposed to describe a further invention, namely that of alphabetic writing also, in addition to Hieroglyphica. In whichever sense we take it, the sentence is equally applicable to our purpose. Tacitus attributes to the Egyptians the invention of hieroglyphics and considers them to have been the precursors of alphabetic characters.

About a hundred years after the time of Tacitus, i. e. about A. D. 200, lived Clement of Alexandria, one of the Fathers. It appears, from a famous passage in his works, that the Egyptians still practised the art of hieroglyphical writing; and it is remarkable that though Clement gives us a tolerably minute description of its different kinds, he describes no purely alphabetical system at all, as current in Egypt at that time.

Αὐτίκα οἱ παρ' Αἰγυπτίοις παιδευόμενοι, πρῶτον μὲν πάντων τὴν Αἰγυπτίων γραμμάτων μέθοδον ἐκμανθάνουσι, τὴν ἐπιστολογραφικὴν καλουμένην, δευτέραν δὲ τὴν ἱερατικὴν, ἣ χρῶνται οἱ ἱερογραμματεῖς· ὑστάτην δὲ καὶ τελευταίαν τὴν ἱερογλυφικὴν· ἥς ἡ μὲν ἐστὶ διὰ τῶν πρῶτων στοιχείων κυριολογική· ἡ δὲ συμβολική· τῆς δὲ συμβολικῆς, ἡ μὲν κυριολογεῖται κατὰ μίμησιν· ἡ δ' ὥσπερ τροπικῶς γράφεται· ἡ δὲ ἀντικρὺς ἀλληγορεῖται κατὰ τινας αἰνυγμούς. "Ἡλιον γ' οὖν γραφῆαι βουλόμενοι, κύκλον ποιοῦσι· σελήνην δὲ, σχῆμα μηνοειδές, κατὰ τὸ κυριολογούμενον εἶδος. Τροπικῶς δὲ, κατ' οἰκειότητα μεταγόντες καὶ μετατιθέντες· τὰ δ', ἐξαλλάττοντες· τὰ δὲ πολλαχῶς μετασχηματίζοντες, χαράττουσιν· τοὺς γ' οὖν τῶν βασιλέων ἐπαίνους θεολογούμενοις μύθοις παραδιδόντες, ἀναγράφουσι διὰ τῶν ἀναγλύφων. Τοῦ δὲ κατὰ αἰνυγμούς τρίτου εἶδους δεῖγμα ἔστω τόδε· τὰ μὲν γὰρ τῶν ἄλλων ἄστρον, διὰ τὴν πορείαν τὴν λοξήν, ὅφρων σώμασιν

ἀπείκαζον · τὸν δὲ ἥλιον τῷ τοῦ κανθάρου · ἐπειδὴ κυκλοτερὲς ἐκ τῆς βοείας ὄνθου σχῆμα πλασάμενος, ἀντιπρόσωπος κυλινδεῖ.”

The educated amongst the Egyptians, immediately learn, first of all, the system of Egyptian letters called *Epistolographic*, secondly the *Hieratic*, which the sacred scribes make use of, and last, the perfect kind the *Hieroglyphic*. One species of the last is that which speaks directly by means of the first elements [*or letters*]; another kind is symbolic. Of the symbolic, one kind speaks directly by means of imitation, a second kind is written as if metaphorically, and a third, on the contrary, allegorizes by means of certain enigmas.

Thus, when they wish to describe the sun, they make a circle, and for the moon a lunar figure; these are instances of the direct kind.

In the metaphoric species they transfer and change according to peculiarities; or they alter them, or change their forms in many ways and so engrave them.

Thus they consign the praises of their kings to theologic descriptions, and carve them in anaglyphs. Of the enigmatic kind let this be an instance: They represent the other stars, on account of their oblique courses, by the bodies of serpents, but the sun by that of the beetle, because it makes a round-ball of cow dung and rolls it up in an aspect facing the sun.

Although this description appears at first sight to be almost as obscure as the original subject, which it is adduced to explain, yet its mazes may be threaded, and a tolerably good idea formed of the various kinds of writing which, according to Clemens of Alexandria, were in use among the Egyptians.

In the first place there were three principal divisions, the *Epistolographic*, the *Hieratic* or *Sacerdotal*, and the *Hieroglyphic*. I shall be somewhat anticipating the order of the subjects, but it will simplify the matter to the reader, if I state that these three grand divisions have been recognized by those who in our own times have explored the ruins in Egypt, with a view to elucidating this very matter. It is admitted by almost all who have written on the subject, that these three grand divisions of the Egyptian

writing are based on the same principles, and differ only in the greater or less perfection with which the characters are delineated. In the Hieroglyphic style, the figures retain their natural shape with tolerable accuracy, whilst the Sacerdotal writing is more cursive, and the Epistolographic or common writing of the country is loosely delineated and very far removed from the original symbols. A ready instance of the difference between the three kinds may be found in our own writing. We have the old Gothic character, the Roman letters, in which books are generally printed, and the cursive letters found in manuscripts.

The identity of the three kinds of Egyptian characters, —I mean identity of principle,—has been generally admitted by the best authorities. Dr Young's remarks upon the subject are as follows :

The question, however, respecting the nature of the Enochian character, appears to be satisfactorily decided by a comparison of various manuscripts on papyrus, still extant, with each other. Several of these published in the great *Description de l'Egypte*, have always been considered as specimens of the alphabetical writing of the Egyptians, and certainly have as little appearance of being imitations of visible objects, as any of the characters of this inscription [*the Rosetta inscription*], or as the old Arabic or Syriac characters, to which they bear, at first sight, a considerable resemblance. But they are generally accompanied by tablets, or delineations of certain scenes, consisting of a few visible objects, either detached or placed in certain intelligible relations to each other ; and we may generally discover traces of some of these objects, among the characters of the text that accompanies them. A similar correspondence between the text and the tablets is still more readily observed in other manuscripts, written in distinct hieroglyphics, slightly yet not inelegantly traced, in a hand which appears to have been denoted by the term Hieratic ; and by comparing with each other such parts of the text of these manuscripts as stand under tablets of the same kind, we discover, upon a very minute examination, that every character of the distinct hieroglyphics has its corresponding trace in the running hand ; some times a mere dash or line, but often perfectly distinguishable, as a



coarse copy of the original delineation, and always alike when it answers to the same character. The particular passages, which establish this identity, extending to a series of above ten thousand characters, have been enumerated in the *Museum Criticum*; they have been copied in adjoining lines, and carefully collated with each other; and their number has been increased by a comparison with some yet unpublished rolls of papyrus lately brought from Egypt. A few specimens from different MSS. will be sufficient to show the forms through which the original representation has passed, in its degradation from the *sacred* character, through the *hieratic*, into the *epistolographic* or common running hand of the country. SUPPL. OF ENC. BRIT. article Egypte, p. 54.

A question here occurs, which can be answered without much difficulty. How has it arisen that Herodotus and Diodorus Siculus mention only two kinds of Egyptian writing, whilst Clement says that in his time there were three? It may be replied that Herodotus perhaps considered the Sacerdotal and Common characters to be the same; for they are not very different in form, having both a strong tendency to a cursive form. Or it is very likely that the third species may have been a further development of the other two during the three hundred years that intervened between the age of Clement and of Diodorus.

Returning then to the description, before quoted from Clement: we find that he says nothing of the Epistolographic, and Hieratic modes, but confines himself to the Hieroglyphic as being the most important, and in fact, if our former remarks are correct, the parent of the other two.

Clement, then, tells us that of the Hieroglyphic writing there are two subdivisions; 1. that which is significant by means of the first elements: and 2. the symbolic. Of these two kinds, he unfortunately omits to describe the former, and confines all his attention to a description of the latter, the symbolic style. As the name *symbolic* gives a tolerably accurate idea of what is intended to be signified, namely Hieroglyphics specifically so called, and as its subdivisions, the direct, the metaphoric, and the enigmatic, are mere



modes of the symbolic, it can answer no good purpose to occupy our time in further illustrating them. The whole of the question turns on the meaning of that subdivision of hieroglyphical writing, *which speaks by means of the first elements*. After many years of doubt, during which different authors have expressed opposite opinions concerning the meaning which Clement of Alexandria intended to convey by this phrase, it is now generally admitted, that the *first elements* are the *first letters of the words*: and that this mode is, in fact, the link by which Hieroglyphics are connected with the alphabetic system. It is a remarkable confirmation of this opinion that a rude sort of alphabetic writing, founded on the first letter of each word, has actually been discovered among the hieroglyphics of Egypt; but every instance of this sort is so recent as to confirm, without a doubt, the theory that the alphabetic principle was first introduced into Egypt in consequence of its intercourse with Greece, and did not exist even in the tenth century before Christ, much less at the far earlier period when Moses led the Israelites through the deserts of Arabia.

According to this rude alphabetic mode, a word might be expressed by a series of objects, the first letters of whose names spelled the word required. Thus the word 'house' might be represented by five pictured images, Hen, Owl, Urn, Stork, Egg, because the first letters of these names, h, o, u, s, e, make up the word required. This mode will readily occur to the mind of the reader as the basis of those spelling books for children, in which each letter of the alphabet is connected with the name of some natural object, as C for cat, D for dog, H for Horse, and many others.

The cumbersome nature of this mode of writing is apparent: it has little in common with the modern alphabets by which thought may be transferred to paper almost as

quickly as it arises in the mind, and quite as quickly as it can be expressed in words. There are, moreover, other features of this system, as it prevailed among the Egyptians, which shew plainly that it was confined in its use, and only applied where other modes, then known, failed to be applicable at all. It appears by an inspection of the Egyptian monuments that proper names alone are expressed by these picture letters, and that each name so written is surrounded by an oval line, as a guide to the reader that the figures enclosed within the line must be read not hieroglyphically, but according to the first letter of each object's name. Again, as the same letter may be represented by a variety of objects, all of which have that letter standing the first in the name which expresses it, the result is that the same word may be expressed by a variety of pictured objects each different from the others, and this would cause much distraction to the reader's mind, and much uncertainty in the subject represented. This difficulty may be illustrated by a plain example in English. Whilst one writer might represent the word *house* by the five objects before described, *hen* for h, *owl* for o, *urn* for u, *stork* for s, and *egg* for e, another might represent the same word by a different combination, as for example ; *Hippopotamus*, *Ostrich*, *Unicorn*, *Sheep*, *Elephant*. Neither is this an imaginary theory ; for such various modes actually occur on the monuments of Egypt, where the names of Psammitichus, Cleopatra, Berenice, Ptolemy and other princes are written with various pictured objects, and it is discovered by a patient investigation and comparison of these that many of the letters have three, four, six, and even a dozen corresponding objects by which they may be represented. Whether the Egyptians possessed any orthographical rules by which the use of these figures was regulated, has not yet been discovered.

Still, this difficulty being removed, so many still remain

to impede the general use of this system of writing that it must ever be limited, as it was in Egypt, to a very narrow sphere of use, and furnishes no argument against the principle for which we are now contending, that a hieroglyphical, and not an alphabetical, mode of writing, prevailed in Egypt, long after the time of Moses and the Exodus.

2. *Absence of all mention of phonetic or alphabetic legends in the writings of the ancients.*

The cursory manner in which Clement of Alexandria dismisses in a few words his account of that kind of Egyptian writing which is acknowledged to have been phonetic, is a circumstance much to be regretted. Still this very omission is not without its significance, and it strongly militates against the supposition which has within the last few years been advanced, that the greater part, or certainly a considerable part, of Egyptian writing was alphabetic.

The supporters of the theory now in vogue [*says* DR WALL, *p.* 20] endeavour to account for the ancients not having transmitted to us a single phonetic legend, by the remark, that alphabetic writers would be more struck with ideagraphic ones, and, therefore, more likely to record such. This explanation very imperfectly accounts for their *total* omission of phonetic examples, and it does not at all account for their giving the writing the general character of being symbolic or ideagraphic, if the greater part of it really was, as is now supposed, of quite a different nature.

2. *Present appearance of the Egyptian monuments and various opinions about them.*

Under this head might be comprised a full and complete investigation of every inscription which now exists; but we must be content to limit our observations to the inferences which have been drawn by others, who have made the Egyptian remains an especial subject of their study. An antecedent argument that the Egyptian hieroglyphics describe ideas and not words, may clearly be derived from



the general opinion of mankind, prevalent over the whole world, concerning their nature. This opinion is certainly vague, because it cannot be traced to any better source than the general appearance which the Egyptian hieroglyphics present to the eye of the beholder. In order to appreciate this kind of internal evidence it is necessary to visit the soil of Egypt, or at least to inspect the large collections of Egyptian remains which enrich the museums of different cities. The impression left on the mind by such a process is certainly to the effect that those sculptures denote pictural ideas and not words or letters. And every attempt to maintain the contrary proposition has hitherto ended in a confirmation of the original opinion, always excepting the foreign words before mentioned. The opinions of different writers may here with propriety be introduced.

The first of these is Dr Young, who started the theory *that perhaps the Egyptian hieroglyphical characters may have the force of letters, and designate words not ideas*. The premature death of this talented man cut short his investigations almost immediately after he had pointed out the way in which he intended to pursue them, and left the field open for Mr Champollion: as the enquiries of this latter gentleman have at two different periods led him to put forth views rather conflicting with each other, it does not appear that much real progress has been made in this difficult subject. In 1812, he published an essay at Grenoble entitled "De L' Ecriture Hieratique des anciens Egyptiens," in which he expressed certain opinions, which, not having an opportunity of consulting the original essay, I quote from the little volumes, "Egyptian antiquities," vol. ii, p. 348, published by the Society for diffusing useful knowledge.

1. That the writing of Egyptian MSS. of the second kind (the hieratic) is not *alphabetic*.



2. That this second system (of writing) is only a simple modification of the hieroglyphic system, and differs from it only in the form of the signs.

3. That the second kind (of writing) is the *hieratic* of the Greek authors, and must be considered as an *hieroglyphical tachygraphy*.

4. Lastly that the hieratic characters (and consequently those from which they are derived) are *signs of things and not of sounds*.

There is little doubt, we think we may say none, that to the time of Dr Young's discovery, M. Champollion was convinced, as he expresses himself, that the "hieroglyphics are signs of things and not of words." In his letter to M. Dacier of September 22, 1822, on the contrary, he expressed himself in the commencement of his letter in the following manner :—"I may venture to hope that I have succeeded in shewing that both the *hieratic* and *demotic* (enchorial) writing are not entirely alphabetical, as had been generally supposed, but often also *ideagraphic*, like the hieroglyphics themselves, that is to say, that they represent sometimes the *ideas*, and sometimes the *sounds* of a language. I think I have at last succeeded, after ten years of assiduous research, in bringing together data almost complete on the general theory of these two kinds of writing, on the origin, the nature, the form, and the number of their signs, the rules of their combinations by means of those among these signs which have functions purely logical or grammatical, and in having thus laid the first foundation of what we may call the grammar and dictionary of these two modes of writing which are employed in the great number of monuments whose interpretation will throw so much light on the general history of Egypt." Not a word is here said of the Grenoble publication; nor does the author any where else in this letter make the slightest allusion, that we can find, to his former opinion on the nature of the hieroglyphics. The author goes on to state, that the subject of this letter is the pure hieroglyphics, "which, forming an exception to the general nature of the signs of this kind of writing, were endowed with the power of *expressing the sounds* of words, and have been employed on the public monuments of Egypt in recording the *titles, names, and surnames of the Greek and Roman sovereigns*, who successively governed it.

Two years after the last date, namely in 1824, M. Champollion published his great work "*Précis du système hieroglyphique &c.*" in which he reviews the whole subject which for so many years had occupied his attention.

The author's conclusion (continues the writer of the "Egyptian Antiquities,") as to the nature of what is called hieroglyphical writing is this :—"The Egyptians, possessing three different modes of expressing their ideas, employed in the same text that mode which seemed best adapted to the representation of a given idea. If the object of an idea could not be clearly indicated either by the direct mode of a *figurative* (pictorial) character, or tropically (indirectly) by a *symbolical* character, the writer had recourse to *phonetic* characters, which readily accomplished either the direct or indirect representation of the idea, by the conventional mode of exhibiting the word which is the sign of this idea. Consequently the series of phonetic characters was the most efficient and the most common part of the Egyptian system of writing; by them particularly the most metaphysical ideas, the most delicate shades of language, the inflexions, and, finally, all grammatical forms, could be represented with almost as much perspicuity as they are by means of the simple alphabet of the Phœnicians or Arabs.

It follows from all that has been said, and is indubitably proved,—

1. That there was no Egyptian writing altogether *representative* (pictorial), as the Mexican has been supposed to be.

2. That there does not exist on the monuments of Egypt any regular writing altogether *ideagraphic*, that is, composed altogether of figurative and symbolical characters.

3. That primitive Egypt did not employ a mode of writing altogether *phonetic*.

4. But that the *hieroglyphic* mode of writing is a complex system—a system, *figurative*, *symbolical* and *phonetic*, in the same text, in the same phrase, I would almost say in the same word."

This conclusion is certainly not very flattering to those who may hereafter enter upon the investigation of the Egyptian hieroglyphics. But it is sufficient to shew that, according to both the theories which M. Champollion has adopted, the Egyptian writing was either very partially alphabetic, or even not alphabetic at all.

The same inference has been drawn by others, who, since the time of Champollion, have examined the Egyptian monuments.

Zoëga, a learned Italian, by studying the obelisks and other Egyptian monuments in Italy, made out a list of 958

different hieroglyphical characters. To suppose that these represented letters is an absurdity; for no known language ever contained even so many as 100 elementary characters such as we call letters, and, if the 958 represented words—even monosyllables—or simple ideas, which are represented by words, the language was clearly not alphabetic.

Even in the short compass of the Rosetta stone, in fourteen lines, M. Champollion detected no less than 166 different characters to which the same observation applies, that they are too many to be letters, and if they represent words, the language is not alphabetic.

Again in all the twenty lines, of which the hieroglyphical part of the Rosetta stone consisted, when unmutilated, there were about 2218 characters; and in the portion of the stone, giving the same meaning in the Greek language, the number of letters altogether was 7290. It appears then, that if the hieroglyphical characters were letters, the Egyptian language could “express as much as the Greek in less than one-third of the number of the characters.\*” This is surely a strong reason for believing that the hieroglyphics denote ideas or words, and not letters, and it is strengthened by an observation made by M. Champollion himself, that many of the characters in the hieroglyphic text of the Rosetta stone are purely figurative or pictorial, as is manifest even by their shape. Thus he recognized, in the Greek, the following words, *temple*, *image*, *statue*, *child*, *asp*, and *column*, all of which, in the hieroglyphical part of the Rosetta inscription, were represented by their corresponding figures, and not by words formed out of letters.

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\* Egyptian Antiquities, vol. ii, p. 368.



4. *Sameness of the written but difference of the spoken language in the various parts of ancient Egypt.*

It has been observed, in our notice of the Chinese language that its written characters can be understood by all the tribes and nations, notwithstanding the great differences of dialect which prevail in that vast empire. But it appears, from the sameness of the hieroglyphical inscriptions in Egypt, even in provinces many hundred miles apart, that the state of things was precisely the same. The same hieroglyphics are found on the borders of Ethiopia, as in the Delta near the sea ; yet it is certain that the dialects must have been numerous and differed much from one another in so large a tract of territory. As the inscriptions were of course intended to be read, it is a natural inference that those who spoke different dialects, could all read these common inscriptions ; but this can only happen, when the characters are ideagraphic ; i. e. when they suggest the same ideas to the minds of persons speaking different languages, for, if the emblems suggested words only and not ideas, they would be intelligible to those only who spoke the language in which those words are found. An instance of this may easily be given. If the following inscription were placed in some conspicuous place

$$30-10=20$$

it would be intelligible to Englishmen, Frenchmen, Germans &c. without the least difficulty : but each of these nations would read it in a very different manner ; and the words which each employed would be unintelligible to all the others. Thus the Englishman would read it

“Thirty minus ten is equal to twenty.”

The Frenchman would say

“Trente moins dix égale vingt.” &c.

If therefore inscriptions of this kind should hereafter be found in every part of Europe where it was known that



the languages varied much, it would be a proof that the mode of writing arithmetical subjects was nevertheless the same, and consequently ideagraphic. This is the case with all the Egyptian hieroglyphics, from one end of Egypt to the other, even where it is known that the dialects differed much, and so identical is the style of the hieroglyphics that it is difficult to determine the age of any of them, for they are the same whether they belong to the 200th or the 2000th year before Christ.\* The writing, therefore, of the Egyptians was ideagraphic, and continued so for many centuries, with, apparently, no improvement in its perspicuity, or alteration of its style, beyond the introduction of a phonetic system as we have before described it, to express foreign names, the ideas of which would not of course form part of their usual train of thought, and would therefore have no representative emblem among their usual ideagraphic characters.

5. *The introduction of the Greek alphabet into the Coptic, or later Egyptian language, shews that there was no previous Egyptian alphabet.*

Egypt, though intimately connected by commerce with Judæa, and separated from it by a very narrow strip of sandy deserts, was later than some of the other ancient kingdoms in receiving the doctrines of Christianity. We find that, even in the days of Clemens Alexandrinus, who died in the beginning of the third century, the Egyptian priests continued to maintain their empire over the minds of the people, and still practised their mystic ceremonies in every part of Egypt. But there had been two powerful principles brought into action, which sooner or later were

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\* The zodiac of Dendera was supposed to belong to the times of the Pharaohs, until an inscription was deciphered which proved it to be of the age of Tiberius.

certain to destroy effectually the ancient system. The dynasty of the Ptolemies, from B. C. 280 to A. D. 1, had introduced into Egypt so large a number of Greek settlers that a sensible effect was produced on the language and habits of the people. It is also said that there were at least a hundred thousand Jews, dwelling in Alexandria or the neighbouring provinces. The foreign element was therefore remarkably powerful, and, as we have seen, the ancient hieroglyphical system had long been modified by the introduction of initial letters used phonetically and no longer ideographically. But it was reserved for Christianity to effect the total overthrow of the hieroglyphics, and to assimilate the literature of Egypt to that of Greece and of other nations. The result of this change was the appearance of a new language, expressed in writing by Grecian characters. The Coptic language first appears soon after the introduction of Christianity into Egypt; and no books exist in the Coptic language, except rituals, books of devotion, and translations of the Scriptures.

There are strong grounds for believing that numerous words, remaining from the old Egyptian, entered into the composition of this dialect; but it is equally certain that the Greek language contributed its share, and perhaps also Arabia, which has so often been mixed up with the revolutions of Egypt, may have furnished a considerable number of words and idioms. All this was the natural course of events, as similar cases may be cited from almost every nation in the world. But why was the Greek alphabet selected as the vehicle in which this new language was to be conveyed? If the Egyptian language possessed an alphabet of its own, there would be no necessity for the adoption of any other. For the same reason, also, the older inscriptions of the country could scarcely have become unintelligible, as they now are. The gradual

change of the idiom would have shewn itself, no doubt, as it has done in the English language, but the letters, those fixed elements of words, would have been still the same. This, however, was not the fact: for the character, in which all Coptic books were written, is essentially Greek, and as different as can be conceived from all the older Egyptian writing, whether inscribed on the public buildings, or preserved in the numerous rolls of papyrus, which are continually found among the ruins. This is a remarkable circumstance; for there is no gradation between the hieroglyphics and the Coptic MSS. It appears, also, by the discoveries of Champollion, Dr Young, and others, that the hieroglyphical system comes much later down than the beginning of the Christian era. It therefore existed contemporaneously with the transcription of Coptic manuscripts, each decidedly different from the other. It was this difference which prevented a fusion of the two. The hieroglyphics were essentially ideagraphic, like the present writing of the Chinese. All attempts to combine them with an alphabetical system are clumsy and unsuccessful. It is possible to express, as the Chinese have done, names by the characters which come nearest to the sounds of those names; or, as the Egyptians did, to use initial letters to express phonetically those words which they derived from their connection with other nations; but the fate which befel the Egyptian hieroglyphics, will probably some day or other fall upon the bulky and toilsome literature of the Chinese, if they should ever be conquered by an European nation, whilst at the same time they become Christianized by its missionaries. The result will be that an European alphabet will be adopted, in which all new books will be written, whilst their 260 simple characters with the 80,000 more complex ones which have been formed out of them, will, in seventy years after the change takes place,

become as unintelligible as the hieroglyphics. If such a revolution ever should be made, the argument on which I am now insisting will be as applicable to the case of the Chinese as it now is to that of the Egyptians. Their language, previously to the change, had no alphabet of its own, but was ideagraphic, because, when at a later date, it appears as decidedly alphabetic, it was obliged to borrow from a foreign language the characters which were to form its alphabet.

## NOTE.

Dr Wall seems to have satisfactorily shewn that the phonetic or alphabetic writing of the Egyptians was derived from their intercourse with the Greeks, and he supports his view by the authority of Herodotus and Diodorus Siculus.

We are informed, says he, by Herodotus, that before the reign of Psammetichus, all foreigners were excluded from Egypt, but that he, having gained the throne by the aid of some Ionian and Carian soldiers who had been shipwrecked on the coast, gave them a settlement in the country, and had certain Egyptian children committed to their care, to be by them instructed in the Greek language, and consequently in the Greek mode of writing. The words of the original are as follows: *Τοῖσι δὲ Ἴωσι καὶ τοῖσι Καρσι, τοῖσι συνκατεργασαμένοισι αὐτῷ ὁ Ψαμμίτιχος δίδωσι χώρους ἐνοικῆσαι ἀντίους ἀλλήλων—πρῶτοι γὰρ οὗτοι ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ ἀλλόγλωσσοι κατοικίσθησαν—Καὶ δὴ καὶ παῖδας παρέβαλε αὐτοῖσι Αἰγυπτίους, τὴν Ἑλλάδα γλῶσσαν ἐκδιδάσκεσθαι.\**—HER. lib. ii, c 154. This account of Herodotus is corroborated by



Diodorus Siculus, both as to the reign in which the intercourse with Greeks began and as to the immediate consequence of that intercourse, But the latter historian makes a more direct reference to alphabetic writing, as he tells us of the Egyptian, being instructed, not merely in the Greek language, but in Greek learning. The following are his words :

*Καὶ [Ψαμμήτιχος] φιλέλλην ὦν διαφερόντως, τοὺς υἱοὺς τὴν Ἑλληνικὴν ἐδίδαξε παιδεῖαν. Καθόλου δὲ πρῶτος τῶν κατ' Αἴγυπτον βασιλέων, ἀνέφξε τοῖς ἄλλοις ἔθνεσι τὰ κατὰ τὴν ἄλλην χώραν ἐμπόρια· καὶ πολλὴν ἀσφάλειαν τοῖς καταπλέουσι ξένοις παρέχετο. Οἱ μὲν γὰρ πρὸ τούτου δυναστεύσαντες, ἀνεπιβατὸν τοῖς ξένοις ἐποιοῦν τὴν Αἴγυπτον, τοὺς μὲν φονεύοντες, τοὺς δὲ καταδουλούμενοι τῶν καταπλεόντων.†* DIOD. SICUL. lib. i, cap. 67.

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\* Literally translated thus : “ But to the Ionians and Carians, who had worked with him, Psammitichus gives places to live in, opposite to one another—for these first, of a different language, were settled in Egypt—And indeed also he placed with them Egyptian boys, to be taught the Hellenic tongue.”

† Literally translated thus : “ And [Psammetichus] being singularly fond of the Greeks, taught the children the Greek learning. And in general, he first of the Egyptian kings, opened to other nations the ports throughout the rest of the country, and afforded much security to strangers who sailed thither. For those who ruled before him, made Egypt inaccessible to strangers, slaying some and enslaving others, of those who sailed thither.

## CHAPTER 30.

STYLE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT THE SAME THROUGHOUT—BECAUSE  
ALL WRITTEN OR COMPILED AT THE SAME TIME. CHALDAISMS  
IN THE EARLY PARTS OF THE BIBLE, THOUGH NOT SO MANY  
AS IN THE LATER BOOKS—REASON OF THIS—CHALDEE  
AND HEBREW VERY SIMILAR.

It may, not without justice, be demanded, that I should now reply to an objection which may be made bearing reference to the language or style observable in different parts of the Old Testament. If that volume was compiled and put into its present form all at once after the Babylonish captivity, its style will certainly exhibit marks of uniformity, and also of the corruption, which it necessarily underwent by the mixture of Chaldee words and idioms. This is a reasonable inference, and I believe that facts will both warrant the inference, and confirm the supposition upon which it is grounded.

It has been observed by Bishop Tomline as quoted in chapter 6 of this work, that

those who are best acquainted with the original writings of the Old Testament, agree that there is a marked difference in the style and language of its several authors; and one learned man in particular concludes from that difference, “that it is certain the five books, which are ascribed to Moses, were not written in the time of David, the psalms of David in the age of Josiah, nor the propheties of Isaiah in the time of Malachi.”

As the writer of this extract was himself unacquainted with the language in which the Old Testament is written, the opinion declared in his work, being at second hand,

loses much of the value which might otherwise be attached to it, and the small value which it possesses, is entirely set aside by more decisive evidence to the contrary, coming from those who are well acquainted with the original Hebrew. Let us then hear the testimony of Dr Wall on this subject :

It is to be observed that never was a human being more venerated by his countrymen than this prophet [*Moses*] was; and that in consequence the style introduced by him was closely imitated by all the succeeding Hebrew writers. This is very decidedly proved by the fact, that although Hebrew continued a living language for nine hundred \* years after his time, yet there is scarcely more variation of orthography in the different parts of the Hebrew Scriptures than if they had been written by different authors in the same year. Part of this wonderful identity is indeed to be attributed to a cause (of which the remotest suspicion has not been hitherto entertained) which shall be explained in my next publication ; but the remaining part is quite sufficient to establish the reality of the imitation in question, and thereby to account for the continuation, through the subsequent Hebrew compositions, of the peculiarities which are found in the Pentateuch. (p. 344.)

Here is clearly stated the fact that the books of the Old Testament are all written in the same style, and the reason of this identity is said to be the veneration which the Israelites paid to the memory of their great law-giver. But, surely, we must not believe that divine teachers, such as the Hebrew writers are supposed to have been, would write in a style that was in use 900 years ago, to the manifest detriment of all the existing generation then alive, out of regard to a single man, who had been dead for so many centuries. I think those who have gone through the preceding chapters of this work, will doubt whether the later

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\* I hold that Hebrew was a living language sixteen hundred years after the time of Moses, and that Moses himself did not speak Hebrew. The passage is quoted not on account of these incidental remarks, but only to prove that the style and age of Genesis and Malachi are the same.

writers had any opportunity of imitating the style of the Pentateuch; for if it was in existence at all, it was certainly mislaid and lost, until found by Hilkiah the priest and Shebna the scribe in the reign of king Josiah. But, granting that it was in public use, it may be doubted whether all succeeding writers would copy its style. Dr Wall himself was not convinced of it, when he wrote what has been quoted above, for, at page 362, we find another reference to the same subject.

I have already noticed how very little change took place in Hebrew during the 900 years that it continued a living language after the time of Moses. This undoubtedly is to be attributed principally to the veneration in which the Jewish legislator was held by his countrymen; but part of the effect must be laid to the account of the great fixedness and stability of the Shemitic languages. One of them, the Arabic, is yet spoken through extensive regions of the world, and now at a distance of near 4000 years from Abraham, it still retains a great number of words and also the grammatic inflexion of the verbs, the same as they are found in Hebrew.

Here we have a second reason given why the style of Malachi is identical with that of Genesis, and though it should be admitted that the two reasons are not opposed, the one to the other, yet it must be evident that, if the second reason be the true one, the first loses all its force, and becomes unnecessary, for if the language of the Hebrews was permanent, the later writers could not have imitated the idiom of Moses out of reverence for his character, but as a matter of necessity, whether they would or not. I therefore set aside both these reasons, because they are mere suppositions, and substitute a third reason why the style of all the old Testament is the same throughout, namely because it was all written at or about the same time.

We may now proceed to notice the second objection



which might be made to the supposition that the whole of the Old Testament was written after the Babylonish captivity, that not only should its style be proved to be similar throughout, but also the whole of it, and not merely the later books ought to bear traces of the corruption which it suffered in consequence of that great national calamity ; in short, we should expect to find Chaldaisms i. e. Chaldee words and forms of speech, occurring not only in the books which are admitted by all to have been written since the Babylonish Captivity, but in all the earlier books as well. To this observation it is replied that Chaldaisms do actually occur, not only in the later books, but even in the books of Moses, though for reasons, which will presently be assigned, instances of Chaldee idioms are brief and few.

The only instance which we will notice is in connection with the name of the Almighty in Genesis i, 1, which, as is well known, is אֱלֹהִים *Elohim*, a word in the plural number. Dr Gesenius says, in his Thesaurus, that the singular of this word never occurs except in poetic language, in imitation of the Aramæan [Syrian] languages, or in later Hebrew.

To this Dr Lee in his Hebrew Lexicon (אֱלֹהִים) makes the following objection :

It occurs, however, in Deut. xxxii, 15, 17. Are we to suppose that Moses has *imitated the Syrians* here, or that this exhibits a specimen of *modern Hebrew*? The word occurs, moreover, again and again in Job, who must have lived as early as the sons of Israel. See my introduction to that book, § iii. Is it necessary also to suppose, that we have here nothing but *modern Hebrew*, אֱלֹהֵי נֹכַח *a strange god*, Dan. xi, 39 ; אֱלֹהֵי כָל-אֵל *every god*, i. e. *any god*. ib. 37. &c.

If it had ever occurred to Professor Lee that the Old Testament is a continuous compilation, put together in more modern times out of original documents, he would not have asked the question whether Moses imitated the Syrians, but whether he who compiled the Old Testament

imitated the Syrians. The answer to this may be given in the affirmative. If the whole of the Old Testament was compiled, long after the Babylonish captivity, we must not infer that chaldaisms would be found in the earlier books; for the pure Hebrew language, such as we have it, may perhaps be the language which the Jews spoke immediately after the captivity, and the Chaldaic Hebrew may be the dialect into which the pure language had degenerated in the course of the first hundred, or two hundred years after the Jews had returned back to Judæa. But waving this point at present, and granting that the Chaldaic idiom was introduced into Judæa with the Babylonian captivity, we might certainly expect to find Chaldee, i. e. Syriac expressions in every part of it, but very rarely, of course, in the early part of the Old Testament, because, as the original documents, for the preceding history, had been written before the Israelites had come much into contact with the Chaldees, it is probable that they would contain no Chaldaisms at all, and yet the compiler might be very likely to introduce a few in the course of his labour of uniting so many fragments into one narrative.

The occurrence of the singular name of God in Deut. xxxii, 15, 17, may therefore be both a Chaldaism and a specimen of modern Hebrew, which Dr Lee seems to have thought impossible, because he considers Moses to have written the Pentateuch as we now have it.

The true difficulty is, not to explain why the name of God in the singular number occurs in the Scriptures of a nation that so rigidly believed in only one god as the Jews, but how it is possible that a word expressive of a variety of gods could find its way into those books. Professor Lee gives us an account, but not an explanation, of this matter:

The plural אלהים, used for the *True God*, has given rise to various speculations; some supposing, particularly the elder divines and Hutchin-

sonians, that the notion of a Trinity in Unity lay concealed in this word; others, again, particularly the Rationalists of modern Germany, have thought that vestiges of a very ancient polytheism were discoverable in it. Both seem, in this case, to have taken too much for granted, viz. that the ancients were guided in their writings by the technical rules of modern grammarians; and also that they were complete metaphysicians: neither of which can be maintained, hence both are probably false. . . . . The Rationalists, too, suppose that from the occurrence of this word in conjunction with, or separated from, that of **יהוה**, they can ascertain the fact that the book of Genesis was originally composed out of two or more documents: one containing the one word, another the other. &c. Gesenius has applied this theory to the book of Psalms also; and has actually ascertained that, in some instances, the one word occurs more frequently than the other. This theory, as applied to Genesis, must necessarily be false, for we are expressly informed, Exod. vi, 2, 3, (see also my Prolegomena to Mr Bagster's Poly. Bib. Prol. i, § iii, par. ii,) that the word **יהוה** was unknown to the patriarchs: and the probability is, that, if this book is really patriarchal, which I believe to be the case, the introduction of this word must have been the work of Moses, its authorised editor. In all the other cases, the inquiry can afford no useful result.

To these remarks I have only to reply that every inquiry, which leads to fixing an historical fact or removing a popular error, is both useful and important. Let it be granted that the name of **Iaō** or **Jehovah** was first introduced by the revelation of God to Moses. The difficulty still remains to account for its being coupled with the plural **Elohim**, as if we should say in English the "Gods **Jehovah**." This would be a remarkable expression, if it occurred in the Greek or Latin language; and yet the Greeks and Latins actually believed in a plurality of gods. How then is it to be explained? It may be admitted that **Jehovah**, the specific name of the Israelitish God, was a new term, unknown to preceding generations and even to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: but the generic term **Elohim** 'gods' could not be a new term, even to a nation, who admitted one God only. It may be explained by supposing



that the Canaanitish nations, among whom the Israelites settled, and whose language they gradually learnt in the place of the Egyptian language which they gradually forgot, worshipped a variety of gods, whom they expressed collectively under the name of Elohim ‘the gods.’ According to this view, the original documents of the early part of the Hebrew Scriptures contained the expression Jehovah Elohim “the Gods Jehovah,” which was accurately copied by the later compiler, though it was sometimes, and particularly in more modern times, modified into the singular number, which was far more consistent with the peculiar monotheism of the Israelites.

Thus then the occurrence of the name of God in the singular number, at Deut. xxxii, 15, 17, and elsewhere, may be, as Gesenius supposes, a Chaldaism, introduced probably by the compiler. But Dr Lee himself shews that it is in many cases difficult to say whether the expression is a Chaldaism or a genuine Hebraism. In his Hebrew Grammar, art. 223, 6, [page 264 of the edition, 1827] he says of the expressions *he hath called thee* Isaiah, liv, 6, and *thy being created*, Ezek. xxviii, 15, “*which are generally thought to be Chaldaisms.*” In this case however, the pause-accent will be sufficient to account for the anomaly.”

It is difficult, it would seem, to distinguish the Chaldee and Hebrew dialects. They are so similar that the Hebrew grammar, by the addition of a few pages, becomes adapted to the Chaldee also, and one Dictionary does for both. Vitringa passes the same judgment in his OBSERV. SAC. lib. i, cap. 4 :

“Sane Chaldæam aut Syriacam linguam etiam nunc experimur omnium minime ab Hebræa lingua differre, ita ut dialectus potius et varia eloquutio, quam lingua ab Hebræa diversa, habenda sit.”

In truth we even now find that of all languages the Chaldee or Syrian differs the least from the Hebrew, so that it is rather to be esteemed a dialect or varied pronunciation than a different language.



This will also account for the remarkable fact that the language in which the Old Testament is written, and which we term Hebrew, is actually termed Chaldee by Philo Judæus, lib. II, de vita Mosis, vol. ii, pag. 138 edit. Lond. 1742.

*Τὸ παλαιὸν ἐγράφησαν οἱ νόμοι γλώσση Χαλδαϊκῇ, καὶ μέχρι πολλοῦ διέμειναν ἐν ὁμοίῳ, τὴν διάλεκτον οὐ μεταβάλλοντες, ἕως μῆπω τὸ κάλλος εἰς τοὺς ἄλλους ἀνθρώπους ἀνέφηναν αὐτῶν.*

The Laws were written formerly in the Chaldee tongue, and remained for a long time in the same state, not changing the dialect, so long as they did not reveal their beauty to other nations.

The inference which I would draw from these observations is this — that the common Hebrew is the language spoken by the Israelites between the Captivity and the Christian era—that we know nothing of the earlier dialect, because no writings, in which it occurs, have come down to us in their original state — that the Chaldee dialect, as it is called, is no more than a modified form of the Hebrew, existing, first, concurrently with it, and afterwards, when the Jewish state was broken up by the Romans, superseding altogether the more pure Hebrew and like all other human dialects, perishing in due course of time, like the Hebrew which it had superseded.

## CHAPTER. 31.

## ALPHABET OF CADMUS—PHŒNICIAN ORIGIN OF LETTERS—

## CONCLUSION.

If it should then appear certain that the Egyptians did not possess an alphabetic mode of writing when the Israelites escaped from captivity, it is an obvious inference that the fugitives, who had all been born and bred in Egypt, could not convey with them into the desert the knowledge of an art, which was still, for many centuries, unknown in the country where they had so long sojourned. The only writing with which even Moses himself was at this time acquainted, was the hieroglyphical, such as prevailed in Egypt. But between the hieroglyphical style of writing and the Hebrew mode, found in the books ascribed to Moses and other authors of the Old Testament, there is a wide interval, which hardly could have been passed, by either a nation or an individual, during the lifetime of one man. There is in fact, as we have seen in chapter 29, an intermediate stage—the symbolic mode, as still practised in China—between the Egyptian hieroglyphics and the Hebrew consonants. Here then is the most important question connected with our subject. Where and by what means did the Hebrews acquire the art of writing, as exemplified by the particular letters or characters in which the books of Moses and their other Scriptures are composed? To answer this question we must institute an analysis into the Hebrew alphabet, and compare it with other ancient alphabets, and especially the Grecian, to which it bears a remarkable likeness: we must also examine the Grecian writers, through whom almost all our knowledge of the ancient world is desired, and see if any clue can be obtained from their works to

explain the obscure subject now before us. Either process is sufficient to form the subject of a separate work, and it is the author's earnest hope that he may have health and strength hereafter to pursue minutely the subject which he is compelled at present to dismiss with a hasty notice.

The common letters of the alphabet are said to have been introduced into Greece by Cadmus, as some say about 1300, but according to Sir Isaac Newton and Mr Fynes Clinton, not more than 900 years before the Christian era.

That letters were at that time unknown to every other European nation, is a point which has always been considered as certain, until the opposite opinion was taken up by the Celtic antiquaries, some of whom advanced the plausible conjecture that the Phœnicians, with their merchandize, may have introduced their letters also into Ireland and the other north-western countries of Europe to which they traded. Other Celtic scholars have contended for the antiquity of the northern Runic characters ; others again for an early Pelasgic alphabet in Greece ; but neither of these systems has yet acquired so much stability as to supersede and extinguish the current opinion that Greece first, and through her the rest of Europe owe letters, as well as civilization generally, to Phœnicia. We need not now enquire from what other, more easterly, people the Phœnicians themselves acquired their alphabet ; for it is sufficient to shew that letters were transmitted by them to Greece, 200, if not 500, \* years after the time of Moses. Pursuing the train of Grecian history downwards from the time of Cadmus, we find that even then four hundred years passed away before Homer lived and composed his poems on the Trojan war. It is also said that these poems were preserved by oral tradition alone

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\* According as an earlier or later date is assigned to Cadmus.

two hundred years longer, until Pisistratus, or as some say Solon, and others Lycurgus, collected them in writing and introduced them into Greece. Whatever may be the age at which Homer lived, and composed those celebrated poems, it is admitted by all that they did not come to the knowledge of the Greeks until about the year 600 before Christ, and were not, in fact, until that time, reduced into the form of separate and perfect poems.

It is well known that the alphabet of Cadmus consisted of sixteen or seventeen letters only: but the Hebrew alphabet has two and twenty. This seems to shew that the alphabet of Cadmus is the more ancient of the two. Languages become more varied, and their alphabets more extensive, as time advances. The English language contained 24 letters only until a very recent period, when I and J, U and V, from having been originally identical, have become distinct letters. If Cadmus \* migrated from Palestine, as is said, so long after the time of Moses, why did he take only 16 or 17 letters with him, and not all the 22 that had been so long used, according to received opinions, in the country which he left behind him? The natural inference from this fact is that the 22 Hebrew

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\* I am not ignorant that opinions are divided concerning the age of Cadmus: some chronologers make him contemporary or almost contemporary with Moses, others make him to have lived more than 200 years later. I prefer the latter opinion, on the general principle of not taking every thing for truth which is told us by historians, for the purpose of exalting the antiquity of their nation. No books existed in Greece until many hundred years after the time of Cadmus, and I look with extreme suspicion on all narratives, handed down by tradition before books were invented. Mr Fynes Clinton, in his *Fasti Hellenici*, vol. i, page 86, observes; "We cannot assign more than a century to the period which elapsed from the coming of Cadmus to the death of Eteocles; which will place Cadmus at about 130 years before the fall of Troy." But the war of Troy is placed by the common chronology in 1180, and by Sir Isaac Newton as late as 900 before Christ. This calculation makes the age of Cadmus vary from B. C. 1310 down to B. C. 1030,---consequently from two to five hundred years after the time of Moses.



letters were *not all* used in Palestine until after the time of Cadmus; and if the Hebrews copied their letters from those of Cadmus, they would at first have taken 16 only, and afterwards, as the necessity for more arose, they would have increased that number to two and twenty. I believe that this process actually took place—that the Hebrews learnt their alphabet and most of their civilization from the Phœnicians and other inhabitants of Canaan, and that in the age of Cadmus they used only 16 or 17 letters, because at that time the Canaanites possessed no more.

There is no reason, says Shuckford,\* to think the first and most ancient Hebrew alphabet had thus many letters. Irenæus says expressly

*Ipsæ antiquæ et primæ Hebræorum litteræ, et sacerdotales nuncupatæ, decem quidem sunt numero.*

The ancient Hebrew letters denominated *Sacerdotal*, are ten in number.

It is commonly said that sixteen letters formed the alphabet of Cadmus: these were  $\alpha, \beta, \gamma, \delta, \epsilon, \iota, \kappa, \lambda, \mu, \nu, \omicron, \pi, \rho, \sigma, \tau, \upsilon$ . But it appears from old inscriptions that the letter U was not used, its place being supplied by O; if this be so, we must fill up the number of the sixteen letters by inserting F the digamma, which certainly occurs on inscriptions, and had a power kindred to that of U, V or W. As the Hebrew has no U, but a *vau* or *waw*, sounding something like V, W, or F, the likeness between the Greek and Hebrew alphabets is rendered remarkably striking.

It is said by some ancient writers that the Grecian alphabet was increased from its original sixteen letters by Palamedes, who added  $\theta, \xi, \phi, \chi$ , and by Simonides, who added  $\zeta, \eta, \psi, \omega$ . But several of these letters occur also in the modern Hebrew alphabet; yet it is almost certain that neither Palamedes nor Simonides ever was in Phœnicia or the land of Canaan, they therefore did not borrow these

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\* Connection Vol.i, p. 255, 3d edit note.

letters from the Israelites, as is proved also by the nature of these letters, which either are double letters, combined of two others, as *zeta* or *zed* which is a combination of *d* and *s*, or bear a certain relation to other letters for prosodial purposes, as *eta* and *omega*, which are merely long forms of *epsilon* and *omicron*.

If then the supplementary letters were invented in Greece, they must evidently have been borrowed from the Greeks by the Hebrews: nor is this supposition so improbable as it may seem; for in the age of Alexander there was a great influx of Greeks into Palestine: Grecian arts and Grecian literature were introduced, and in the days of the Syrian kings, who bore the name of Antiochus, Judæa ran a narrow risk of becoming altogether a Grecian dependency. Here then is to be found the channel through which the Hebrew alphabet, originally consisting of ten, and afterwards of sixteen letters, was finally increased to the number of two and twenty. At the same period also, the limited means which the ancients possessed for multiplying books were wonderfully increased by Eumenes king of Pergamus, who, in imitation of the Egyptian papyrus, and in rivalry of Ptolemy's famous Alexandrian library, caused the material called *Pergament* or *parchment*, to be fabricated from the skins of goats, and on this new substance all the most famous Grecian writings were copied out to enrich the newly formed library of Pergamus.

These facts seem to show that books were first brought into use and their use finally extended, between the sixth and third centuries before the Christian era. The same inference, too, seems to follow from the general prevalent use of inscriptions anterior to that date. Herodotus relates that he saw an ancient hexameter verse—the most ancient then known—sculptured in Cadmean letters by Amphitryon on a tripod at Delphi. It appears, indeed,

that before the date, so often already mentioned, books, as we now have them, were absolutely unknown: every thing was carved in stone; laws were promulgated and proclamations issued by means of inscriptions. The two tables of stone given by God through Moses, have nothing to distinguish them from other similar tablets, which have been used by all nations for the same purpose. The Decemviri, at Rome, followed the same mode, which continued to be practised in Athens, and over all Greece, for many hundred years. These facts lead to the belief that it was not different with the Israelites, a nation, chosen indeed by the Almighty to play a signal part in the history of the world, but endowed with no peculiar development of intellectual genius, that might enable them to outstrip the rest of the world, in arts, letters or general civilization.

two hundred years longer, until Pisistratus, or as some say Solon, and others Lycurgus, collected them in writing and introduced them into Greece. Whatever may be the age at which Homer lived, and composed those celebrated poems, it is admitted by all that they did not come to the knowledge of the Greeks until about the year 600 before Christ, and were not, in fact, until that time, reduced into the form of separate and perfect poems.

It is well known that the alphabet of Cadmus consisted of sixteen or seventeen letters only: but the Hebrew alphabet has two and twenty. This seems to shew that the alphabet of Cadmus is the more ancient of the two. Languages become more varied, and their alphabets more extensive, as time advances. The English language contained 24 letters only until a very recent period, when I and J, U and V, from having been originally identical, have become distinct letters. If Cadmus\* migrated from Palestine, as is said, so long after the time of Moses, why did he take only 16 or 17 letters with him, and not all the 22 that had been so long used, according to received opinions, in the country which he left behind him? The natural inference from this fact is that the 22 Hebrew

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\* I am not ignorant that opinions are divided concerning the age of Cadmus: some chronologers make him contemporary or almost contemporary with Moses, others make him to have lived more than 200 years later. I prefer the latter opinion, on the general principle of not taking every thing for truth which is told us by historians, for the purpose of exalting the antiquity of their nation. No books existed in Greece until many hundred years after the time of Cadmus, and I look with extreme suspicion on all narratives, handed down by tradition before books were invented. Mr Fynes Clinton, in his *Fasti Hellenici*, vol. i, page 86, observes; "We cannot assign more than a century to the period which elapsed from the coming of Cadmus to the death of Eteocles; which will place Cadmus at about 130 years before the fall of Troy." But the war of Troy is placed by the common chronology in 1180, and by Sir Isaac Newton as late as 900 before Christ. This calculation makes the age of Cadmus vary from B. C. 1310 down to B. C. 1030,---consequently from two to five hundred years after the time of Moses.



letters were *not all* used in Palestine until after the time of Cadmus; and if the Hebrews copied their letters from those of Cadmus, they would at first have taken 16 only, and afterwards, as the necessity for more arose, they would have increased that number to two and twenty. I believe that this process actually took place—that the Hebrews learnt their alphabet and most of their civilization from the Phœnicians and other inhabitants of Canaan, and that in the age of Cadmus they used only 16 or 17 letters, because at that time the Canaanites possessed no more.

There is no reason, says Shuckford,\* to think the first and most ancient Hebrew alphabet had thus many letters. Irenæus says expressly

*Ipsæ antiquæ et primæ Hebræorum litteræ, et sacerdotales nuncupatæ, decem quidem sunt numero.*

The ancient Hebrew letters denominated *Sacerdotal*, are ten in number.

It is commonly said that sixteen letters formed the alphabet of Cadmus: these were  $\alpha, \beta, \gamma, \delta, \epsilon, \iota, \kappa, \lambda, \mu, \nu, \omicron, \pi, \rho, \sigma, \tau, \upsilon$ . But it appears from old inscriptions that the letter U was not used, its place being supplied by O; if this be so, we must fill up the number of the sixteen letters by inserting F the digamma, which certainly occurs on inscriptions, and had a power kindred to that of U, V or W. As the Hebrew has no U, but a *vau* or *waw*, sounding something like V, W, or F, the likeness between the Greek and Hebrew alphabets is rendered remarkably striking.

It is said by some ancient writers that the Grecian alphabet was increased from its original sixteen letters by Palamedes, who added  $\theta, \xi, \phi, \chi$  and by Simonides, who added  $\zeta, \eta, \psi, \omega$ . But several of these letters occur also in the modern Hebrew alphabet; yet it is almost certain that neither Palamedes nor Simonides ever was in Phœnicia or the land of Canaan, they therefore did not borrow these

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\* Connection Vol.i, p. 255, 3d edit note.

letters from the Israelites, as is proved also by the nature of these letters, which either are double letters, combined of two others, as *zeta* or *zed* which is a combination of *d* and *s*, or bear a certain relation to other letters for prosodial purposes, as *eta* and *omega*, which are merely long forms of *epsilon* and *omicron*.

If then the supplementary letters were invented in Greece, they must evidently have been borrowed from the Greeks by the Hebrews: nor is this supposition so improbable as it may seem; for in the age of Alexander there was a great influx of Greeks into Palestine: Grecian arts and Grecian literature were introduced, and in the days of the Syrian kings, who bore the name of Antiochus, Judæa ran a narrow risk of becoming altogether a Grecian dependency. Here then is to be found the channel through which the Hebrew alphabet, originally consisting of ten, and afterwards of sixteen letters, was finally increased to the number of two and twenty. At the same period also, the limited means which the ancients possessed for multiplying books were wonderfully increased by Eumenes king of Pergamus, who, in imitation of the Egyptian papyrus, and in rivalry of Ptolemy's famous Alexandrian library, caused the material called *Pergament* or *parchment*, to be fabricated from the skins of goats, and on this new substance all the most famous Grecian writings were copied out to enrich the newly formed library of Pergamus.

These facts seem to show that books were first brought into use and their use finally extended, between the sixth and third centuries before the Christian era. The same inference, too, seems to follow from the general prevalent use of inscriptions anterior to that date. Herodotus relates that he saw an ancient hexameter verse—the most ancient then known—sculptured in Cadmean letters by Amphitryon on a tripod at Delphi. It appears, indeed,

that before the date, so often already mentioned, books, as we now have them, were absolutely unknown: every thing was carved in stone; laws were promulgated and proclamations issued by means of inscriptions. The two tables of stone given by God through Moses, have nothing to distinguish them from other similar tablets, which have been used by all nations for the same purpose. The Decemviri, at Rome, followed the same mode, which continued to be practised in Athens, and over all Greece, for many hundred years. These facts lead to the belief that it was not different with the Israelites, a nation, chosen indeed by the Almighty to play a signal part in the history of the world, but endowed with no peculiar development of intellectual genius, that might enable them to outstrip the rest of the world, in arts, letters or general civilization.

## APPENDIX.

### 1. THE SAMARITAN PENTATEUCH.

*From Dean Prideaux's Connection of Sacred and Profane History,*

*Vol. I, p. 416, sixth edit., 1719.*

The Samaritans ¶ receive none other scriptures, than the five books of Moses, rejecting all the other books, which are in the Jewish canon. And these five books they still have among them written in the old Hebrew or Phœnician character, which was in use among them before the Babylonish Captivity, and in which both these, and all other scriptures were written, till Ezra transcribed them into that of the Chaldeans. And this hath led many learned men into a mistake, as if the Samaritan copy, because written in the old character, were the true authentic copy, and that Ezra's was only a transcript; whereas in truth the Samaritan Pentateuch is no more than a transcript, copied in another character from that of Ezra, with some variations, additions, and transpositions made therein. That it was copied from that of Ezra, is manifest from two reasons. For first, it hath all the interpolations that Ezra's copy hath; and that he was the author of those interpolations is generally acknowledged; and therefore had it been ancients than Ezra's copy, it must have been without them. 2dly, There are a great many variations in the Samaritan copy, which are manifestly caused by the mistake of the similar letters in the Hebrew alphabet; which letters having no similitude in the Samaritan character, this evidently proves those variations were made in transcribing the Samaritan from the Hebrew, and not in transcribing the Hebrew from the Samaritan. It seems from hence to be beyond all doubt that Manasseh, when he fled to the Samaritans, first brought the Law of Moses among them. Esarhaddon indeed\* sent to his new colony, which he had planted in Samaria, an Israelitish priest to teach them the way of worshipping God according to the manner of the former inhabitants, but it appears not that he did this by bringing the law of Moses among them, or that they were any other wise instructed in it, than by tradition, till Manasseh came among them. For had they received the law of Moses from the

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¶ Hieronymus in Dialogo adversus Luciferianos. Epiphanius, Hæres. 9. Benjaminis Itinerarium, p. 38. Euty chius, &c.

\* II Kings, xvii, 28.



first, and made that the rule of worship, which they paid the God of Israel, from the time of the coming of that priest among them, how could they have continued in that gross idolatry of worshipping other gods in conjunction with him, which that Law doth so often and so strictly forbid? And yet, in this idolatry, it is agreed on all hands, they continued until the building of the temple on mount Gerizim; and therefore it seems clear, that till then they had not a copy of this law, but that when Manasseh, and so many apostate Jews with him, came over to them, and settled in Samaria, they first brought it among them: and because the old Phœnician character was that only which the Samaritans were accustomed to, they caused this law, for their sakes, to be written out in that character, and in this they have retained it ever since. This Samaritan Pentateuch was well known to many of the Fathers, and ancient Christian writers. For it is quoted by Origen, Africanus, Eusebius, Jerom, Diodor of Tarsus, Cyril of Alexandria, Procopius Gazæus, and others. That which made it so familiar to them, was a Greek translation of it then extant, which now is lost. For as there was a Greek translation of the Hebrew scriptures made for the Hellenistic Jews, which we call the Septuagint, so also was there a like Greek translation of the Samaritan scriptures (that is the Pentateuch, which they only allowed for such (made for the use of the Hellenistical Samaritans, especially for those of Alexandria,\* where the Samaritans dwelt in great numbers, as well as the Jews. Origen, indeed, and Jerom, understood the Hebrew language, and might have consulted the Samaritan text, that being none other than Hebrew in another character. But the rest of those mentioned, understanding nothing of it, could no otherwise have any knowledge of this Samaritan Pentateuch, but from the translation of it. And there is also an old scholiast upon the Septuagint, that makes frequent mention of it. But this, as well as the other ancient books, in which any mention of the Samaritan Pentateuch is to be found, were all written before the end of the sixth century. From that time for above a thousand years after, it hath lain wholly in the dark, and in an absolute state of oblivion among all Christians both of the west and east, and hath been no more spoken of after that time by any of their writers, till about the beginning of the last Century, when Scaliger having gotten notice, that there was such a Samaritan Pentateuch among those of that sect in the east, † made heavy complaints, that no one would take care to get a copy of it from thence, and bring it among us into these parts. A little after this ¶ Arch-Bishop Usher procured several copies of it out of the east, and not long after Sancius Harley, a priest of the Oratory at Paris, and afterwards bishop of St Malo's in Brittany, † brought another copy into Europe, and repositied it in the library belonging to that order in Paris. From

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\* Josephus Antip. lib. 12. c. 1 & lib. 13. c.

† De Emendatione Temporum lib. 7. p. 669.

¶ Waltoni Prolegom. xi. ad Biblia Polyglotta Lond. §. 10.

‡ Morini Exercitatio prima in Pentateuchum Samaritanum, cap. 1.

which copy Morinus, another priest of the same order, published it in the Paris Polyglot. This Sancius Harley had been ambassador from the French king, at Constantinople, where having resided in that quality ten years, he made use of the opportunity which he had there, of making a good collection of Oriental books, which he brought home with him on his return, and having a while after enter'd himself among the Oratorians at Paris, he did put all these books into their Library, and among them was this copy of the Samaritan Pentateuch, which Morinus published.

The Samaritans, besides the Pentateuch in the original Hebrew Language, have also † another in the Language that was vulgarly spoken among them. For as the Jews after the Babylonish Captivity degenerated in their language from the Hebrew to the Babylonish dialect, so the Samaritans did the same; whether this happened by their bringing this dialect out of Assyria with them, when they first came to plant in Samaria, or that they first fell into it, by conforming themselves to the speech of those Phœnician and Syrian nations, who lived next them, and with whom they mostly conversed, or else had it from the mixture of those Jews, who revolted to them with Manasseh, we have not light enough to determine. But however it came to pass after it so happened, the vulgar no longer understood what was written in the Hebrew language. And therefore as the Jews for the sake of the vulgar among them, who understood nothing but the vulgar language, were forced to make Chaldee versions of the Scriptures, which they call the Targums or Chaldee paraphrases; so the Samaritans were forced for the same reason to do the same thing, and to make a version of their Pentateuch into the vulgar Samaritan, which is called the Samaritan version. And this Samaritan version, as well as the original Sam. text Morinus published together in the Polyglot above-mentioned. The Samaritan text he printed from Sancius Harley's copy, but the Samaritan version he had from Peter a Valle, gentleman of Rome, who having many years travelled over the east, brought it thence with him, and communicated it to Morinus. But that work being precipitated with too much haste, it had passed the press before such other helps came to him from Periscius, Dr Comber, Dean of Carlile, and others, as would have enabled him to have made it much more perfect; but what was wanting therein, was afterwards rectified in the London Polyglot, in which the Samaritan text, and the Samaritan version, and the Latin translation of both, are published all together much more complete and correct than they were before. This Samaritan version is not made, like the Chaldee among the Jews, by way of paraphrase, but by an exact rendering of the text word for word for the most part without any variation. So that Morinus thought one Latin Translation might serve for both, and the London Polyglot hath followed the same method; only where there are any variations, they are marked at the bottom of the page.

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† Vide Waltonem et Morinum, *ibid*.

As to the variations, additions, and transpositions, whereby the Samaritan copy differs from the Hebrew, they are all enumerated in Hottinger's Book against Morinus, and in the collation made of both texts in the last volume of the London Polyglot. It is not to be so much wondered at, that there are these differences between those two copies, as that there should not have been many more after those who had adhered to the one, and those who had adhered to the other, had not only broken off all manner of communication, but had constantly been in the bitterest variance possible with each other for above two thousand years. For so long had passed from the apostacy of Manasseh to the time when these copies were first brought into Europe. After the series of so many ages past, many differences might have happened by the errors of the transcribers, and the most that are between these two copies are of this sort. As to the rest, some are changes designedly made by the Samaritans, for the better support of their cause against the Jews, of which sort one that is notoriously such, will be taken noticed of by and by in its proper place. Others are interpolations for the better explication of the text, added either from other parts of Scripture, or else by way of paraphrase upon it, to express explicitly, what was thought to be implicitly contained therein. Of the first sort are, 1st, The addition which we find in the 18th chapter of Exodus, where between the 25th and the 26th verses is inserted, what we have from the ninth to the fourteenth verse of the first of Deuteronomy inclusively; and 2dly, That which we find in the tenth of Numbers, where between the tenth and the eleventh verses is inserted, all that which we read in the sixth, seventh, and eighth verses of the first of Deuteronomy; both which insertions are wanting in the Hebrew. And of the other sort are what we find in the fourth chapter of Genesis, ver. 8, and in the twelfth chapter of Exodus, verse the 40th. In the first of these, after what is said in the Hebrew Text, And Cain spake (or said) to Abel his Brother, the Samaritan Text adds, Let us go into the field. And in the latter, instead of these words in the Hebrew text; Now the inhabiting of the Children of Israel whereby they inhabited in Egypt, was 430 years: The Samaritan text hath it, Now the inhabiting of the Children of Israel, and their Fathers, whereby they inhabited in the Land of Canaan, and in the Land of Egypt, were 430 years. Both these additions, it is manifest, mend the Text, and make it more clear, and intelligible, and seem to add nothing to the Hebrew copy, but what must be understood by the Reader, to make out the sense thereof. As to the other variations, the most considerable of them are those, which we find in the ages of the Patriarch before Abraham, in which the Samaritan computation comes nearer to the Septuagint, than to the Hebrew, though it differs from both. How these, or the transpositions of verses or the other alterations and additions, which are found in the Samaritan copy, and the differences which from thence arise between the Hebrew and Samaritan Pentateuch, came about, many conjectures have been offered; but no certain Judgment being to be made about them, without a better light to direct us herein, than we can now have, I will trouble the reader with none



of them ; but shall add only this farther upon this head, that none of these differences can infer, that the Samaritan copy, which we now have, is not truly that which was anciently in use among them. For most, if not all of those passages, which were quoted out of it above eleven hundred years since, by those writers I have mentioned, as differing from, or agreeing with the Hebrew text, and by some of them much earlier, are now to be found in the present Samaritan copies in the same words, as quoted by them, and in the same manner differing from, or agreeing with that text. There is an old copy of the Samaritan Pentateuch now shewn at Shechem, (or Naplous as they now call it) the head seat of that sect, which would put this matter beyond all dispute, were that true which is said of it. For || they tell us, that therein are written these words : I Abishua the son of Phineas the son of Eleazar the son of Aaron the high-priest, have transcribed this copy at the door of the tabernacle of the Congregation, in the thirteenth year of the children of Israel's entrance into the holy land. But Dr Huntington, late bishop of Rapho in Ireland, having, while chaplain to the Turkey company at Aleppo, been at Shechem, and there examined this copy upon the spot, found no such words on the Manuscript, nor thought the copy ancient. Whether the Samaritans did in ancient times absolutely reject all the other scriptures besides the Pentateuch, some do doubt ; because it is certain § from the discourse of the woman of Samaria with our Saviour, that they had the same expectations of a Messiah, that the Jews had, and this they say, they could no where clearly have, but from the Prophets. And it cannot be denied, but there is some force in this argument. Perchance although they did read the Pentateuch only in their synagogues, yet anciently they might not have been without a due regard to the other sacred writings, whatsoever their sentiments may be of them at present.

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|| Waltoni Prolegom. xl. ad Biblia Polyglotta Lond. §. 17. Hottingeri Exercitationes Anti-Morinianæ. Sect. 37. Basnage's History of the Jews, book 2, chap. 2, p. 81. § John iv. 25.



## 2. MUTABILITY OF LANGUAGE.

*From Dr Shuckford's Connection of Sacred and Profane History,*

*Vol. I, p. 124, third edit., 1743.*

The general causes \* of the mutability of language, are commonly reduced to these three, 1. The difference of climates. 2. An intercourse of commerce with different nations; or, 3. The unsettled temper and disposition of mankind.

1. The difference of climates will insensibly cause a variation of language, because it will occasion a difference of pronunciation. It is easy to be observed, that there is a pronunciation peculiar to almost every country in the world, and according to the climate, the language will abound in Aspirates or Lenes, guttural sounds or pectorals, labials or dentals; a circumstance which would make the very same language sound very different from its self, by a different expression or pronunciation of it. The † Ephraimites, we find, could not pronounce the letter schin as their neighbours did. There is a pronunciation peculiar to almost every province, so that if we were to suppose a number of men of the same nation and language dispersed into different parts of the world, the several climates which their children would be born in, would so affect their pronunciation, as in a few ages to make their language very different from one another.

2. A commerce or intercourse with foreign nations does often cause an alteration of language. Two nations, by trading with one another, shall insensibly borrow words from each other's language, and intermix them in their own; and it is possible, if the trade be of large extent, and continued for a long time, the number of words so borrowed shall increase and spread far into each country, and both languages in an age or two be pretty much altered by the mixture of them. In like manner, a plantation of foreigners may by degrees communicate words to the nation they come to live in. A nation's being conquered, and in some parts peopled by colonies of the conquerors, may be of the same consequence; as may also the receiving the religion of another people. In all these cases, many words of the sojourners, or conquerors, or instructors, will insensibly be introduced, and the language of the country that received them, by degrees altered and corrupted by them.

3. The third and last cause of the mutability of language, is the unsettled temper and disposition of mankind. The very minds and manners of men are continually changing; and since they are so, it is not likely that their idioms and words should be fixed and stable. An

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\* Bodinus in Method. Hist. c. 9.

† Judges xii. 6.

uniformity of speech depends upon an entire consent of a number of people in their manner of expression ; but a lasting consent of a large number of people, is hardly ever to be obtained, or long to be kept up in any one thing ; and unless we could by law prescribe words to the multitude, we shall never find it in diction and expression. Ateius Capito would have flattered Cæsar into a belief, that he could make the Roman language what he pleas'd ; but Pomponius very honestly assured him he had no such power. ‡ Men of learning and observation may think and speak accurately, and may lay down rules for the direction and regulation of other people's language, but the generality of mankind will still express themselves as their fancies lead them ; and the expression of the generality, though supported by no rules, will be the current language ; and hence it will come to pass, that we shall be always so far from fixing any stability of speech, that we shall continually find the observation of the poet verified :

Multa renascentur quæ jam cecidere, cadentque  
Quæ nunc sunt in honore vocabula, si volet usus,  
Quem penes arbitrium est et jus et norma loquendi.

Language will be always in a fluctuating condition, subject to a variety of new words and new expressions, according as the humour of the age and the fancies of men shall happen to introduce them.

These are the general reasons of the mutability of language ; and it is apparently true, that some or other of these have, ever since the confusion of Babel, kept the languages of the world in a continual variation. The Jews mixing with the Babylonians, when they were ¶ carried into captivity, quickly altered and corrupted their language, by introducing many Syriacisms and Chaldeisms into it. And afterwards, when they became subject to the || Greeks and Romans, their language became not only altered, but as it were lost, as any one will allow, that considers how vastly the old Hebrew differs from the Rabbinical diction, and the language of the Talmuds. The Greek tongue in time suffered the same fate, and part of it may be ascribed to the Turks over-running their country, and part of it to the translation of the Roman empire to Constantinople ; but some part of the change came from themselves ; for, as Brerewood has observed, they had changed many of their ancient words, long before the Turks broke in upon them, of which he gives several instances out of the books of Cedrenus, Nicetas, and other Greek writers. §

The numerous changes which the Latin tongue \* has undergone, may be all accounted for by the same reasons : they had in a series of years so diversified their language, that the Salian verses composed by Numa, were scarce understood by the priests in Quintilian's time ; and

‡ For this reason the great orator observes, *Usus loquendi populo concessi, scientiam mihi reservavi.* Cic. de Oratore.

¶ Walton. Prolegom.

|| Id Ibid.

§ Walton in Prolegom. de Linguarum Naturâ, &c.

\* Id. Ibid.

there were but few antiquaries within about three hundred and fifty years, that could read and give the sense of the articles of treaty between Rome and Carthage, made a little after the expulsion of the kings. The laws of the twelve tables, collected by Fulvius Ursinus, and published in the words of the kings and Decemviri that made them, are a specimen of the very great alteration that time introduced into the Latin tongue: nay, the pillar in the capitol, erected in honour of Drusillus about one hundred and fifty years before Cicero, shews, that even so small a tract of time as a century and half, caused great variations. After the Roman tongue attained the height of its purity, it quickly declined again and became corrupted, partly from the number of servants kept at Rome, who could not be supposed to speak accurately, and with judgement; and partly from the great concourse of strangers, who came from the remote provinces, so that the purity of it was to a great degree worn off and gone, before the barbarisms of the Goths quite extinguished it.

And what has thus happened in the learned languages, is as observable in all the other languages of the world; time and age varies every tongue on earth. Our English, the German, French, or any other, differs so much in three or four hundred years that we find it difficult to understand the language of our forefathers; and our posterity will think ours as obsolete, as we do the speech of those that lived ages ago: and all these alterations of the tongues may, I think, be sufficiently accounted for by some or other of the causes before assigned.

## 3. ON ALPHABETIC WRITING.

*From the same work, volume 1, page 222.*

The Latins and Greeks were certainly the only people of Europe that had the use of letters very early: let us now see how they came by their knowledge of them.

And as to the Latins, all writers agree, that they received their letters from the Greeks, being first taught the use of them by some of the followers of Pelasgus, who came into Italy about 150 years after Cadmus came into Greece, or by the Arcadians, whom Evander led into these parts about 60 years after Pelasgus. Pliny and Solinus imagined the Pelasgi \* to have been the first authors of the Latin letters; but Tacitus was of opinion that the first Italians † were taught letters by the Arcadians; and Dionysius ‡ Halicarnasseus expressly affirms the same thing; so that in this point indeed there is a difference amongst writers; but still the Pelasgi and Arcadians being both of them Grecian colonies that removed to seek new habitations, it remains uncontroverted, that the Latins received their letters from the Greeks, whichever of these were the authors of them. It is very probable the Pelasgi might first introduce the use of them, and the Arcadians, who came so soon after them, might bring along with them the same arts as the Pelasgi had before taught, and letters in particular; and some parts of Italy might be instructed by one, and some by the other; and this is exactly agreeable to Pliny. ¶ That the Latin letters were derived from the Greek seems very probable from the similitude the ancient letters of each nation bear to one another. Tacitus || observes, that the shape of the Latin letters was like that of the most ancient Greek ones; and the same observation was made by § Pliny, and confirmed from an ancient table of brass inscribed to Minerva. Scaliger \* has endeavoured to prove the same point, from an inscription on a pillar which stood formerly in the Via Appia to old Rome, and was afterwards removed into the gardens of Farnese. Vossius is of the same opinion, and has shewn at large † how the old Latin letters were formed from the ancient Greek, with a very small variation.

Let us now come to the Greeks; and they confess that they were taught their letters. The ‡ Ionians were the first that had knowledge of them, and they learned them from the Phœnicians. The Ionians did not form their letters exactly according to the Phœnician alphabet, but

\* Plin. l. 7. c. 56.

† L. 11. p. 131.

‡ Dion. Halicar. l. 2.

¶ Lib. 7. c. 56.

|| Tacit. Annal. l. 11.

§ L. 7. c. 58.

\* Digress. ad Annum Euseb. 1617.

† Voss. l. 1, c. 24, 25.

‡ Herod. in Terpsichor.



they varied them but little, and were so just as to acknowledge whence they received them, by always calling their letters Phœnician. And the followers of Cadmus are ¶ supposed to be the persons who taught the Ionians the first use of their letters. This is the substance of what is most probable about the origin of the Greek letters. There are indeed other opinions of some writers to be met with ; for some have imagined that Palamedes was the author of the Greek letters, others that Linus, and others that Simonides ; but these persons were not the first authors, but only the improvers of the Greek alphabet. The long vowels  $\eta$  and  $\omega$  were the invention of Simonides : for at first  $\epsilon$  and  $o$  were used promiscuously, as long or short vowels :  $\phi$ ,  $\chi$ , and  $\theta$ , were letters added to the alphabet by Palamedes ; and  $\xi$  and  $\psi$ , tho' we are not certain who was the author of them, did not belong to the original alphabet ; but still, tho' these letters were the inventions of Palamedes, Linus, or Simonides, yet they cannot be said to be the authors of the Greek letters in general, because the Greeks had an alphabet of letters before these particular ones came into use ; as might be shewn from several testimonies of ancient writers, and some specimens of ancient inscriptions, several copies of which have been taken by the curious.

Vossius \* was of opinion that Cecrops was the first author of the Greek letters ; and it must be confessed that he has given some, not improbable, reasons for his conjecture ; and Cecrops was an Egyptian, much older than Cadmus, and was remarkable for understanding both the Egyptian and Greek tongues ; but the arguments for Cadmus are more in number, and more conclusive than for Cecrops. If Cecrops did teach the Greeks any letters, the characters he taught are entirely lost ; for the most ancient Greek letters, which we have any specimen of, were brought into Greece by Cadmus, or his followers. Herodotus † expressly affirms himself to have seen the very oldest inscriptions in Greece, and that they were wrote in the letters which the Ionians first used, and learned from Cadmus, or the Phœnicians. The inscriptions he speaks of were upon the tripods at Thebes in Bœotia, in the Temple of Apollo. There were three of these Tripods : The first of them was given to the Temple by Amphitryon, the descendent of Cadmus : the second by Laius the son of Hippocoon : the third by Laodamas the son of Eteocles. Scaliger has § given a copy of these inscriptions (as he says) in the old Ionian letters, but I doubt he is in this point mistaken, as he is also in another piece ‡ of antiquity which he has copied, namely, the inscription on Herod's pillar, which stood formerly in the Via Appia, but was

¶ See Plut. Sympos. l. 9. prob. 2. & 3. Philostrat. l. 2. de vit. Sophist. Critias apud Athenæum, l. 1. Clem. Alex. Strom. l. 1. Voss. de arte Gram. l. 1. c. 10. Scaliger in Not. ad Euseb. 1617. Grot. in Not. ad lib. de veritat. Rel. l. 1, n. 13. Bochart. Geog. Sacra.

\* Loc. supr. cit. † Loc. supr. cit.

‡ Digress. ad ann. Euseb.

1617. ¶ Ad Num. Euseb. 1702.

afterwards removed into the gardens of Farnese. The letters on this pillar do not seem to be the old Ionian, as may be seen by comparing them with Chishull's Sigeon inscription, or with the letters on the pedestal of the colossus at Delos, of which Montfaucon gives a copy; but they are either (as Dr Chishull imagines) such an imitation of the Ionian, as Herod a good Antiquary knew how to make; or they are the character which the Ionian letters were in a little time changed to, for they do not differ very much from them. But, to return: It is, I say, agreed by the best writers, that the Greeks received their letters from the Phœnicians, and that the ancient Ionian letters were the first that were in use amongst them. And thus we have traced letters into Phœnicia. We have now to enquire whether the Phœnicians were the inventors of them, or whether they received them from some other nation.

We must confess that many writers have supposed the Phœnicians to be the inventors of letters. Pliny\* and Curtius† both hint this opinion; and agreeable hereto are the words of the Poet ‡.

Phœnices primi, famæ si credimus, ausi  
Mansuram rudibus vocem signare figuris.

And Cretias ¶

Φοίνικες δ' εὐρον γράμματ' ἀλεξίλογα.

And so Hesychius makes *ἐκφονίξαι* and *ἀναγνώσαι*, to act the Phœnician, and to read, to be synonymous terms. But there are other authors, and with better reason, of another opinion. Diodorus || says expressly, that the Syrians were the inventors of letters, and that the Phœnicians learnt them from them, and afterwards sailed with Cadmus into Europe, and taught them to the Greeks. Eusebius assents to this, and thinks § the Syrians that first invented letters, were the Hebrews; tho' this is not certain. It is indeed true \*, that the ancient Hebrews had the same tongue and characters, or letters, with the Canaanites or Phœnicians, as might be evidenced from the concurrent testimonies of many authors; nay, all the nations in these parts, Phœnicians, Canaanites, Samaritans, and probably the Assyrians for some ages, spake and wrote alike.

Athanasius Kircher \* imagined that the Phœnicians learnt their letters from the Egyptians, and endeavoured to prove that the first letters which Cadmus brought into Greece, were Egyptian. He describes

\* Plin. l. 5. & l. 7.      † Lib. 4. § 4.      ‡ Lucan. Pharsal. l. 3.

¶ Apud Athenæum, l. 1.      || Lib. 5.      § Præp. Evang. l. 10.      • Lucian. Chœril. de Solymis. Scal. digress. ad Ann. Euseb. 1617.

‡ Ædip. Ægypt. Tom. 3. diatr. prælusor. 3.

the figures of these Cadmean letters, and endeavours to prove, that they were the very same that were used at that time in Egypt ; but his arguments for this opinion are not conclusive. The letters he produces are the present Coptic, as the very names and figures of them shew evidently ; not that the Greek letters were derived from them, but rather that the Egyptians learned them from the ancient Greeks ; and I believe (says Bishop Walton) whoever shall read the Coptic books, will find such a mixture of Greek words in them, that he cannot doubt but that Ptolemy, after his conquests in Greece, brought their letters, and much of their language into Egypt. Kircher endeavours to shew by their form and shape, that the Greek letters were formed from the Egyptian description of their sacred animals, which he thinks were the letters which the Egyptians at first used in their common writing, as well as in their Hieroglyphical mysteries. These letters, he says, Cadmus communicated to the Greeks, with only this difference, that he did not take care to keep up to the precise form of them, but made them in a looser manner. He pretends to confirm his opinion from Herodotus ; and lastly affirms from St Jerom, that Cadmus, and his brother Phœnix, were Egyptians ; that Phœnix, in their travels from Egypt, stay'd at Phœnicia, which took its name from him ; that Cadmus went into Greece, but could not possibly teach the Grecians any other letters, than what himself had learnt when he lived in Egypt. But to all this there are many objections. 1. The Hieroglyphical way of writing was not the most ancient way of writing in Egypt, nor that which Cadmus taught the Greeks. 2. Herodotus, in the passage \* cited, does not affirm Cadmus to have brought Egyptian letters into Greece, but expressly calls them Phœnician letters ; and, as we said before, the Phœnician letters were the same as the Hebrew, Canaanitish, or Syrian, as Scaliger, Vossius, and Bochart have proved beyond contradiction. 3. St. Jerome does not say whether Cadmus's letters were Phœnician or Egyptian, so that his authority is of no service in the point before us ; and as to Cadmus and Phœnix's being Egyptians, that is much questioned ; it is more probable they were Canaanites, as shall be proved hereafter.

Many considerable writers have given the Egyptians the credit of inventing letters ; and they all agree that Mercury or Thyoth was the inventor of them. Pliny † in the very place where he says that some ascribed the invention of letters to the Syrians, confesses that others thought the Egyptians the inventors of them, and Mercury their first author. Diodorus ‡ expressly ascribes the invention of them to the same person ; and so does Plutarch ¶ and Cicero. || Tertullian § went

\* In Terpsich. *φόνικα τοῦ Κάδμου γράμματα.*

† Hist. l. 7. c. 56. ‡ Diodor. l. 2. ¶ Sympos. l. 20. c. 3. || Lib. de Natura Deorum 3. § Lib. de corona Militis, c. 8. & de Testim. Animæ, c. 5. 9.



into the same opinion ; and we also find it in Plato. Kircher \* describes the shape of the very letters which this Thyoth invented. And Philo-Biblius, the translator of Sanchoniathon's History, quoted by Eusebius and Porphyry, mentions the commentaries of Tautus, or Thyoth, and the sacred letters he wrote his books in ; and Jamblichus † speaks of an incredible number of ‡ books wrote by this Tautus. All Antiquity agrees, that the use of letters was very early in Egypt, and that Thyoth or Mercury was the first that used them there, and taught others the use of them ; but tho' he is by many writers, for this reason, called the inventor of letters, yet I cannot think that he really was so ; considering that mankind was not planted first in Egypt after the flood, but travelled thither from other countries. We have already shewn that the use of letters was in Greece first, then in Italy, and afterwards spread into the other parts of Europe. We have also considered how they came into Greece, namely from Phœnicia ; and they were most probably introduced into Phœnicia from Syria, and the Syrians, Canaanites, and Assyrians, used originally the same letters ; so that in all probability they were introduced into all these nations from one to another, and were earliest at the place where mankind separated at the confusion of tongues ; and from this place 'tis also likely they were propagated into Egypt, and into all other countries into which any companies dispersed from Shinar. I always thought letters to be of an Assyrian original, said Pliny ¶ ; and this was his opinion after duly considering what all other writers had offered about them. It is highly reasonable to think that all arts and sciences flourished here as much earlier, than in other parts, as the inhabitants of these parts were settled sooner than those that went from them. We have a sufficient account of the first kings, and of the ancient history of this part of the world, to induce us to believe that they began their annals very early ; and we are sure from the astronomical observations found at Babylon in the time of Alexander the Great, which were before mentioned, that they studied here, and recorded such observations as they made, very few years after the dispersion of mankind ; a plain indication that they had at this time the use of letters ; and we have no proofs that the use of them thus early in Egypt, or in any other of the nations derived from the dispersion of mankind. Tautus is by all writers held to be the first that used letters in Egypt, and if we suppose him to have used them before he came to be king, when he was Secretary to his father Mizraim, yet still the use of them must be later in Egypt than in Assyria, for they were probably used in the astronomical records at Babylon, even before Mizraim entered Egypt. One thing is here remarkable, namely, that in these

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\* Œdip. Egypt. Tom. 3. diatrib. 2.

† Lib. de Mysteriis, cap. de Deo atque Diis. ‡ By the books of Tautus, I suppose are meant Pillars, or Lumps of Earth with Inscriptions on them, books not being invented in these early Ages. ¶ Hist. Nat. lib. 7. c. 56.



parts, where the early use of letters is so capable of being proved, there is no mention of any particular person's being the author of them; for the opinion of Suidas, who imagined Abraham to be the author of the Assyrian letters, like that of Eupolemus || and Isidorus, § who thought Moses the inventor of the Hebrew letters, and of the Egyptian, deserve no confutation. Letters were used in Assyria, long before Abraham was born, and in Egypt, much longer before Moses; and the ancient Hebrew and Assyrian letters were the same. The true reason why we meet with no supposed author of the Assyrian letters, is, I believe, this; antiquity agreed that letters were not invented in Assyria. Mankind had lived above 1600 years before the flood, and 'tis not probable they lived without the use of letters, for if they had, how should we have had the short annals which we have of the first world? If they had letters, it is likely that Noah was skilled in them, and taught them to his children. In the early ages, when mankind were but few, and those few employ'd in all manner of contrivances for life, it could be but here and there one that had leisure or perhaps inclination to study letters; and yet it is probable that there were too many that understood them amongst the people who remained at Shinar, to prevent any rumour of a single person's inventing them. The companies that removed from Shinar into the other parts of the world, were but rude and uncultivated people, who followed some persons of figure and eminence, who had gain'd an ascendant over them, and hence it might come to pass, that when they had separated their people from the rest of mankind, and came to teach them the arts they were masters of, all they taught them pass'd for inventions of their own, because they knew no other persons skilled in them. But at Shinar there were several eminent persons who lived subject to Nimrod, and who understood and were masters of the several arts and sciences which mankind enjoy'd together before some of the great and leading men made parties for themselves, and separated in order to disperse over the world; and therefore, tho' we here meet with a reported author, when any new science was invented, as Belus was imagined to be author of their astronomy; yet in the case of letters, in which there was nothing new, nothing but what several amongst them, and many that were gone from them were very well skilled in, there could arise no account of any one person amongst them being the author or inventor of them.

There is one consideration more which makes it very probable that the use of letters came from Noah, and out of the first world, and that is the account which the Chinese give of their letters. They assert their first emperor, whom they call Fohi, to be the inventor of them; before Fohi they have no records, and their Fohi and Noah were the same person. Noah came out of the ark in these parts of the world, and the

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|| Euseb. Præp. Evang. lib. 9. c. 26.

§ Origines l. I. c. 3.

letters used here were derived from him; and it happened here, as it afterwards did in other parts of the world, Noah being the sole instructor of his descendents, what he taught them was by after-ages reported to be his own invention, tho' he himself had learned it from those who lived before him. Bishop Walton offers arguments to prove the Chinese had not the earliest use of letters, but all his arguments arise from a supposal that the ark rested in Armenia, and that mankind lived in Assyria soon after the flood, and before they came to China, which I have proved not likely to be true.

We can carry our enquiry into the original of letters no higher. Pliny in one place hints them to have been supposed to be eternal; but that opinion must \* either be founded upon the erroneous notion of the world's being eternal, or can mean no more than that the first men invented them. Some of the Rabbins ascribe them to Adam, and some to Abel, but they have nothing to offer that is to be depended on. But surprizingly odd is the whim of some of the Jewish Doctors, who affirm ten things to have been created on the evening of the first Sabbath, namely, the rain-bow; the hole of the rock, out of which the water flow'd; the pillar of the cloud and of fire, which afterwards went before the Israelites; the two tables on which the law was written; Aaron's rod, and letters; but this sort of trash needs no confutation.

Turpe est difficiles habere nugas,  
Et stultus labor est ineptiarum.

If we consider the nature of letters, it cannot but appear something strange, that an invention so surprizing as that of writing is, should have been found out in ages so near the beginning of the world. Nature may easily be supposed to have prompted men to speak, to try to express their minds to one another by sounds and noises; but that the wit of man should, amongst its first attempts, find out a way to express words in figures, or letters, and to form a method, by which they might expose to view all that can be said or thought, and that within the compass of sixteen or twenty, or four and twenty characters, variously placed, so as to form syllables and words; I say to think that any man could immediately and directly fall upon a project of this nature, exceeds the highest notion we can have of the capacity we are endued with. We have great and extraordinary abilities of mind, and we experience that by steps and degrees we can advance our knowledge, and make almost all parts and creatures of the world of use and service to us; but still all these things are done by steps and degrees. A first attempt has never yet perfected any science or invention whatever. The mind of man began to exert itself as soon as ever it was set on thinking;

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\* Pliny hints it only from the supposal of some persons imagined to be very ancient having used them. Lib. 7. c. 56.

and we find, the first men attempted many of the arts, which after-ages carried forwards to perfection; but they only attempted them, and attained no further than to leave imperfect essays to those that came after. The first men, tho' they had formed a language to be understood by, yet certainly never attained to an elegance of speaking. Tubal-Cain was the first artificer in brass-works and iron, but without doubt his best performances were very ordinary, in comparison of what has been done by later artists. The arts of building, painting, carving, and many others, were attempted very early; but the first trials were only attempts; men arrived at perfection by degrees; time and experience led them on from one thing to another, until by having try'd many ways, as their different fancies at different times happened to lead them, they came to form better methods of executing what they aimed at, than at first they thought of. And thus, without doubt, has it happened in the affair of letters: men did not at first hit upon a method extremely artificial, but began with something easy and plain, simple, and of no great contrivance, such as nature might very readily suggest to them.

And, if I may be allowed to make some conjectures upon this subject, I should offer, that it is not probable, that the first inventors of letters had any alphabet, or set number of letters or any notion of describing a word by such letters as should spell, and thereby express the sound of it. The first letters were, more likely, strokes, or dashes, by which the writers mark'd down, as their fancies led them, the things they had a mind to record; and one stroke, or dash, without any notion of expressing a sound or word by it, was the mark of a whole action, or perhaps of a sentence. When the first man began to speak, he had only, as I before hinted, to fix to himself, and to teach others to know by what particular sounds he had a mind to express the things which he had to speak of: in the same manner, whenever mankind formed the first thoughts of writing, he that formed them had only to determine, by what particular mark he would express the things or actions he had a mind to mark down; and all this he might do, without having any notion of expressing a sound, or word, by the characters he made. We have amongst us, in frequent use, characters which are as significant as letters, and yet have no tendency to express this or that particular sound; for instance, our numeral letters, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, &c. express, as clearly as the words themselves could do, the numbers intended by them, and they no more spell one, two, three, four, five, than they do unum, duo, tria, quatuor; or the Greek words for them, *ἓν, δύο, τρία, τέσσαρα*, &c. Our astronomical characters are of the same sort, .....\* with many others that might be named, and are at sight intelligible to persons of different nations, and who would read them into words of different sounds, as each of their languages would

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\* Here are omitted the signs of the planets, because my printer had no type to represent them: they are, no doubt, familiar to the reader.



direct them. Such as these probably were the letters of the first men; they had no notion of spelling, and expressing the sound of words, but made a few marks to be the signs of the things which they had a mind to write down, and which might be easily understood by those that made them, and by as many others as would take the pains to learn their character. This is what nature would directly lead to, in the first attempts of writing. There could be no notion of spelling, nor any thought of a set number of letters; for men could hardly have a thought of these, until language came to be considerably improved; until they had view'd on all sides the nature of their words, and found out how many sorts of sounds were required to express them. If we look amongst the ignorant persons which are now-a-days in the world, we may see enough to shew us, what the first attempts of nature would be, and what is owing to improvement. There are many persons in the world, who, not having been taught either to write or read, have no notion of spelling, and yet can, by their natural parts, form themselves a character, and with a piece of chalk record, for their own use, all that they have occasion to mark down in their affairs. I have been told of a country farmer of very considerable dealings, who was able to keep no other book, and yet carried on a variety of business in buying and selling, without disorder or confusion: he chalk'd upon the walls of a large room set apart for that purpose, what he was obliged to remember of his affairs with divers persons; and if we but suppose, that some of his family were instructed in his marks, there is no difficulty in conceiving, that he might this way, if he had died, have left a very clear state of his concerns to them. Something of this sort is like the first essay of nature, and thus, without doubt, wrote the first men. It was time and improvement that led them to consider the nature of words, to divide them into syllables, and to form a method of spelling them by a set of letters.

If we look amongst the Chinese ‡ we find in fact what I have been treating of. They have no notion of alphabetical letters, but make use of characters to express their meaning. Their characters are not design'd to express words, for they are used by several neighbouring nations who differ in language; nor are there any set number or collection of them, as one would imagine art and contrivance would, at one time or another, have reduced them to; but the Chinese still write in a manner as far from art, as one can conceive the first writer to have invented. They have a mark for every thing or action they have to write of, and not having contrived to use the same mark for the same thing, with some common distinctions for the accidental circumstances that may belong to it, every little difference of time, manner, place, or any other circumstance, causes a new mark, so that tho' their words are but few, their letters are innumerable.¶ We have in Europe, as I

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‡ Alvar. Seved. Walton. Prolegom.

¶ Their letters are 60, 80, or 120000,



before hinted, characters to express numbers by, which are not designed to stand for any particular sounds, or words; but then, we have artificially reduced them to a small number, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and the cypher 0, will express all numbers that can possibly be conceived. Without doubt the Chinese character might be contracted by a proper method, but the writing of this people, as well as their language, has had little improvement. When mankind began first to make their marks for things, having but few things to mark down, they easily found marks enow for them: As they grew further acquainted with the world, and wanted more characters, they invented them, and the number increasing by degrees, it might cause no great trouble to persons who were skilled in the received characters, and had only to learn the new ones, as they were invented; but it is strange that a nation should go on in this method for thousands of years, as the Chinese have really done; one would think, that it must easily be foreseen to what a troublesome number their letters must in time grow, and that a sense of the common convenience should, at one time or other, have put them upon trying to reduce them; but we find in fact they have not done it. The Chinese report their letters to have been invented by Fohi, or Noah; and in reality both their letters and their language seem so odd, that they might well pass for the invention of the early and uncultivated ages of mankind. Without doubt the Chinese have added to the number of their letters, since the time of their emperor Fohi, and probably altered the sound of their old words, and made some new ones; but they differ so remarkably, both in writing and language, from the rest of mankind, that I can't but think them the descendents of men that never came to Shinar, and who had no concern or communication with those who were thence dispersed, by the confusion of Babel, over the face of the earth.

We have no remains, nor so much as any hints in ancient writers, to induce us to imagine, that this sort of writing was ever used by any of the nations that were dispersed from Babel. We read of no letters on this side India truly ancient, but what were designed to express the words of the people that wrote them. Laertius || indeed seems to hint that the Babylonians had anciently a sacred character, different from the letters in common use: and Eusebius § from Philo-Biblius represents Sanchoniathon to have search'd records wrote in a character of this sort. The sacred letters of Egypt are frequently mentioned: there were two pillars inscribed in this sort of letters, at the tomb of Isis and Osiris; and Strabo speaks of a pillar in memory of Sesostriis,\* which had these characters cut upon it; and the remains of Thyoth were

says Walton; 54409 say other writers; and Le Compte says, that he is no learned man amongst them that does not understand 15 or 20000 of their letters.

|| Burnet. Archæolog. p. 86. § Præp. Evang. l. I. c. 9. \* Lib. 16.

without doubt written in this character.† If we consider that Herodotus and Diodorus mention only two sorts of letters, the sacred and common letters; ‡ and that Clemens Alexandrinus, and Porphyry, and the later writers, who take in the Hieroglyphics, mention ¶ three sorts; it will perhaps induce us to imagine, with Dr Burnet, || that the sacred letters of the Egyptians were different from their Hieroglyphics, and that the Hieroglyphics were not in use in the first times. It is true, Diodorus, § by his description of the sacred letters, makes them to be Hieroglyphics; but I imagine that he happened to do so, because Hieroglyphics being in use before his time, and the sacred letters, which were distinct from them, being then wholly laid aside, he knew of but two sorts, the Hieroglyphics and the common letters; and so took the sacred letters which he found mentioned by those that wrote before him, to be the Hieroglyphics. But Porphyry \* very evidently distinguishes them one from the other: he calls the sacred letters, *Ἱερογλυφικὰ κοινολογούμενα κατὰ μίμησιν* and the common Hieroglyphics, *Συμβολικὰ ἀλληγούμενα κατὰ τινὰς Αἰνιγμοὺς*. It is indeed something difficult to apprehend how letters can be said to imitate the things designed by them; however we find this was an ancient notion. Plato puts it into the mouth of Socrates.† But tho' for these reasons, I imagine that there was an ancient character in Egypt, distinct from both the vulgar letters, and common Hieroglyphics; yet I cannot think, with Dr Burnet, that it was like the letters used in China. The Chinese letters express no words, or particular sounds whatsoever; but the old Egyptian letters did, as appears plainly from the account we have ‡ of Agathodæmon's translating them. The remains of Thyoth were inscriptions on pillars [στηλῶν, ἱερᾶ διαλέκτῳ καὶ ἱερογραφικοῖς γράμμασι κεκαρκτηρισμένων.] Written upon in the sacred language, and sacred characters: and Agathodæmon translated them, [ἐκ τῆς ἱερᾶς διαλέκτου εἰς τὴν Ἑλληνίδα φωνὴν γράμμασιν Ἱερογλυφικοῖς.] out of the sacred language, into the Greek tongue, in sacred letters, i. e. he changed the language, but used the same letters in which Thyoth wrote.¶ Here therefore we see, that the sacred letters were capable of being used

† Euseb. in Chron. ‡ Herodotus in Euterpe. Diodorus lib. 1. ¶ Strom. 1. 5. Porph. de Vita Pythag. p. 185. || Archæolog. § Lib. 3.

\* In lib. de vit. Pythag.

† In Cratylō.

¶ Bishop Stillingfleet, and several other writers, translate *ἱερογλυφικοῖς γράμμασιν*, Hieroglyphic characters; and the learned bishop remarks upon the passage as follows: it is well still, that this history should be translated into Hieroglyphic characters; what kind of translation is that? we had thought Hieroglyphics had been representations of things, and not of sounds and letters, or words. How could this history at first have been written in any tongue, when it was in Hieroglyphics? do Hieroglyphics speak in several languages? and are they capable of changing their tongues? the reader will easily observe from this remark, that *ἱερογλυφικοῖς γράμμασιν*, in the passage before us, should be translated, not Hieroglyphics, but sacred letters, and then the sense will be clear and easy.

to express the words of different languages, and were therefore not like the Chinese, or of the same sort with the first letters of mankind, which expressed no words at all. Plato || says, that Thyoth was the first that distinguished letters into vowels, and consonants, and mutes, and liquids, and was the author of the art of grammar. I doubt these improvements are more modern than the times of Thyoth; however, Plato's opinion in this matter is an evidence that there was no notion in his days of Thyoth's using any other than alphabetical letters.

The use of alphabetical letters therefore began very early in the second world, probably not long after the dispersion of mankind; for the records of the Chaldæan astronomy reach almost up to this time, and Thyoth's inscribing pillars was not above two centuries later. Alphabetical letters were perhaps invented both in Assyria and in Egypt, and to one or other of these two nations all countries are indebted for the use of them. We find the great project at Babel, next to building of the tower, was the improvement of language; for this caused the confusion which scattered mankind over the face of the earth; and if the course they took in this affair was such as I imagined, namely, an attempt to dissolve the monosyllables, of which the first language of mankind consisted, into words of various lengths, in order to furnish themselves with new sets of names for new things; it may be conceived, that a project of this sort might by degrees lead to the invention of alphabetical letters. It is not likely that they immediately hit upon an alphabet, but they made attempts, and came to it by degrees.

If we look into the Hebrew tongue, which, before it was improved, was perhaps the original language of the world, we shall find that its dissyllables are generally two monosyllable words put together: thus the word Barah, to Eat, is only Bar, the old word for Beer, to declare; and Rah, the old word for Raah, to see; so the word Kashash, to gather is only the word Kash, which signifies Straw, and Sash, to rejoice; Ranah, to be moved, is only the old word Ran, which was afterwards wrote Ranan, to be evil; and Nain, which was anciently wrote Nan, to direct the eye; Abah, to be willing, is made of two words, ab, a father, and Bah, the old word for Bohu, for our Lexicons derive Bohu from an ancient word Bah, or Bahah. This observation may, I believe, be carried thro' the whole language; there is hardly an Hebrew dissyllable, except such only as were anciently pronounced monosyllables, or such as are derived from some theme, and made up of the letters of that theme, with some additional affix, but what are plainly and evidently two words (i. e. two significant sounds) join'd together: and I dare say, instances of this kind are not to be found in any of the modern languages. This therefore was the method which men took to make words of more syllables than one, they joined together their monosyllables, and that afforded a new set of words for the enlarging their language; and if this may be allowed me, it will, I think, lead us



to the first step taken towards altering the first characters of mankind. As they only doubled their sounds, so they might at first only repeat their marks, and the two marks put together, which singly were the characters of the single words, were the first way of writing the double ones; and this I think must bring them a very considerable step towards the contriving a method of making letters to stand for sounds, and not for things. When men spake in monosyllables only, and made such marks for the things they spoke of, as the fancy of the first author had invented, and custom had made familiar to all that used them, they might go on as the Chinese have, and never think of making their marks stand for the words they spoke, but rather for the things they meant to express by them; but when they once came to think of doubling or joining their marks, in a manner that should accord with the composition of their words, this would evidently lead them to consider strictly, that as sounds may be made the means of expressing our thoughts, by agreeing to use particular sounds for such thoughts as we would express by them; so also may characters be made the marks of particular sounds, by agreeing what character shall be used for one sound and what for another. To give an instance from some one of the words I have before mentioned: suppose Kashash to be the new invented word, designed to signify what we call to gather, and suppose this new word to be made by agreeing as I said, to put two known words together, Kash, the word for Straw, and Sash, to rejoice; and suppose the ancient character for Kash was 𐤏, and for Sash was 𐤑, the character then for Kashash would be 𐤏𐤑. Here then it would be remarkable, that the reader, however he might not observe it, when he met either of these characters single, yet he could not but see, when he met them together, that each of them stood in the compound word, for a sound, and not for a thing; for the two sounds, one of which each character was to express, were, when put together, to signify a very different thing from those, which each of them single would have offered. If language therefore was altered as I have hinted, which looks very probable from considering the nature of the Hebrew dissyllables; and if this alteration of language led to such a duplication of character as I have imagined, which is a method very easy and natural for men to fall into, we may see that they would be engaged in making characters stand for sounds before they were aware of it, and they could hardly do so long, before they must consider it, and if they come once to consider it, they would go on apace from one thing to another; they would observe how many sounds the words they had in use might be compounded of, and be hereby led to make as many characters as they could frame single sounds, into which all others might be resolved, and this would lead them directly to an alphabet.

It is pretty certain, that various nations, from a difference of pronunciation, or from the different turn of imagination that is always found in different men, would hardly, tho' agreeing in a general scheme for the framing their letters, yet happen to frame an alphabet exactly the same, in



either shape or number of letters; and this we find true in fact: the Arabian and Persian alphabets have such a similitude, that they were probably derived one from the other. And the old Hebrew and Arabian (and perhaps the old Egyptian) characters agree in so many respects, as to give reason to imagine that they were formed from one common plan: tho' they certainly so differ in others, that we can't but think that the authors of them sat down and formed, tho' upon a common scheme, yet in their own way, in the countries which they planted. It is very probable, that there may have been in the world several other alphabets very different from these. I think I have read of a country in India where they use an alphabet of sixty five letters; and Diodorus Siculus\* informs us, that in the island of Taprobane, which we now call Ceylon, they anciently used but seven; but perhaps the reader may be better informed in this matter, if he consults some books which Bishop Walton † directs to, and which I have not had opportunity of seeing, viz. Postellus de 12 Linguis, Duretus de Linguis et characteribus omnium Linguarum; the Alphabetical tables of various characters published at Frankfort 1596; and Fa. Bonav. Hepburn's seventy Alphabets, published at Rome 1616.

#### 4. ON THE VOWEL POINTS.

*From Prideaux's Connection of the History of the Old and New Testament, Sixth edition, Part I, p. 348.*

Whether Ezra on this review did add the vowel points, which are now in the Hebrew Bibles, is an harder question to be decided. It went without contradiction in the affirmative, till Elias Levita a German Jew wrote against it, about the beginning of the Reformation. But Cappellus a Professor of Hebrew in their University at Saumur, hath in a very elaborate discourse made a thorough reply to all that can be said on this head, and very strenuously asserted the contrary. Buxtorf the son in vindication of his father's opinion, hath written an answer to it; but not with that satisfaction to the Learned World, as to hinder the

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\* Lib. 2.

† Prolegom.

generality of them from going into the other opinion. I shall here first state the question, and then enquire on which side of it the truth lieth.

And first, as to the state of the question, it is to be observed, that it is upon another foot among us Christians, than it is among the Jews. For among them it is a principle agreed on of both sides, and which Elias Levita comes in unto, as much as any of the rest, that the reading, as now fix'd and settled by the vowel points in all the Books of Holy Scripture, is the true genuine and authentick reading, as it came from the sacred penmen themselves of the said books, and consequently is as much of divine authority as the letters, only the latter were written, and the other delivered down only by Oral Tradition. The Question therefore between them is only about the time, when this reading was first marked and expressed in their Bibles by the present vowel points. This Elias and his followers say was not done till after the finishing of the Talmud, about five hundred years after Christ; but that till then the true reading, as to the vowels, was preserved only by Oral Tradition. But others of them hold (and this is the prevailing opinion among them) that the reading by Oral Tradition was only till the time of Ezra, and that ever since it hath been written down and expressed by the vowel points affixed to the letters in the same manner as we now have them. So that the controversy among them is not about the truth and authority of the reading according to the present punctuation (for they all hold this to be the very same, which was dictated with the word itself by the Holy Spirit of God from the beginning) but about the antiquity of the figures and points, whereby it is marked and fixed in their present Bibles. But among us Christians, who have no regard to what the Jews tell us of their Oral Tradition, and their preserving of the true reading of the Scriptures by it, the question is about the authority of the reading itself; that is whether the vowel points were affixed by Ezra, and therefore of the same divine authority with the rest of the Text, or else invented since by the Jewish criticks called the Masorites; and whether therefore they may not, as being of human authority only, be altered and changed, where the Analogy of Grammar, the style of the Language, or the nature of the context, or any thing else shall give reason for a better reading. And this being the state of the Question; as it is now in debate among Christians, that side of it which I have here last mentioned is that, which is now generally held for the truth, and these following arguments make strongly for it.

1. The sacred Books made use of among the Jews in their Synagogues\* have ever been and still are without the vowel points, which could not have happen'd, had they been placed there by Ezra, and consequently been of the same authority with the letters. For had they been so, they would certainly have been preserved in the Synagogues

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\* Arcanum punctuationis lib. 1. c. 4.

with the same care as the rest of the text. There can scarce any other reason be given why they were not admitted thither; but that when the Holy Scriptures began first to be publickly read to the people in their Synagogues, there were no such vowel points then in being; and that when they afterwards came in use, being known to be of an human invention, they were for that reason never thought fit to be added to those sacred copies, which were looked on as the true representatives of the original; and † therefore they have been ever kept with the same care in the ark or sacred chest of the synagogue, as the original draught of the Law of Moses anciently was in the ark or sacred chest of the Tabernacle, which was prepared for it; and they are still so kept in the same manner among them even to this day.

2. The ancient ‡ various readings of the sacred text called Keri Cetib, are all about the letters, and none about the vowel points, which seems manifestly to prove, that the vowel points were not anciently in being, or else were not then looked on as an authentic part of the text. For if they had, the variations of these would certainly have been taken notice of, as well as those of the letters.

3. The ¶ ancient Cabbalists draw none of their mysteries from the vowel points, but all from the letters, which is an argument either that these vowel points were not in use in their time, or else were not then looked on as an authentic part of the sacred text. For had they then been so, these triflers would certainly have drawn mysteries from the one, as well as from the other, as the latter Cabbalists have done.

4. If || we compare with the present pointed Hebrew Bibles, the version of the Septuagint, the Chaldee paraphrases, the fragments of Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion, or the Latin version of Jerom, we shall in several places find, that they did read the text otherwise, than according to the present punctuation; which is a certain argument, that the pointed copies, if there were any such in their times, were not then held to be of any authority, for otherwise they would certainly have followed them.

Neither § the Mishnah, nor the Gemara, either that of Jerusalem, or that of Babylon, do make any mention of these vowel points, altho' in several places there are such special occasions and reasons for them so to have done, that it can scarce be thought possible they could have omitted it, if they had been in being, when those books were written, or if in being, had been looked on by the Jews of those times to be of any authority among them. Neither do we find \* the least hint of them in Philo Judæus or Josephus, who are the oldest writers of the Jews, or in any of the ancient Christian writers for several hundred years after Christ. And although among them Origen and Jerom were well skill'd

† Buxtori Synagoga Judaica cap. 14. ‡ Arcanum punctuationis lib. I. cap. 7. ¶ Arcanum punctuationis lib. I. c. 5. || Arcanum punctuationis lib. I. cap. 8, 9, 10. § Arcanum punctuationis cap. 5. \* Arcanum punctuationis lib. I. c. 10.

in the Hebrew language, yet in none of their writings do they speak the least of them. Origen flourished in the third and Jerom in the fifth century; and the latter having lived a long while in Judæa, and there more especially applied himself to the study of the Hebrew learning, and much conversed with the Jewish Rabbis for his improvement herein, it is not likely that he could have missed making some mention of them through all his voluminous works, if they had been either in being among the Jews in his time, or in any credit or authority with them, and that especially since in his commentaries, there were so many necessary occasions for his taking notice of them. And it cannot be deny'd but that this is a very strong argument against them.

Many more arguments are urged on this side of the question. But the chief strength of what is said for it lying in these I have mentioned, I shall not trouble the reader with the rest, and that especially since some of them will not hold water. For to instance in one of them, great stress is laid on this to prove the vowel points to be of late date, that their names are thought to be of late date, they being of the Chaldee and not of the Hebrew dialect. But it is certain the Jews had the present names of their months from the Chaldeans, as well as the names of their vowels, and yet it is as certain, that notwithstanding this the names of these months were in use in the time of Ezra, for they are named in Scripture, both in the book of Ezra, and also in that of Nehemiah, the former of which was written by him; and why then might not the names of these vowels have been in Ezra's time too, notwithstanding this objection? and this is all, which those on the other side contend for. But the other arguments which I have above recited, are of much greater weight. If any one would see all at large, what hath been said on this head, Cappellus's book, which I have already mentioned, will fully furnish him herewith.

But there have not been wanting learned men of the contrary opinion, and much hath been written for it, especially by the two Buxtorfs, the Father and the Son; their arguments, which carry the greatest weight with them, are these which follow.

1. The \* ancient books Bahir and Zohar, which are said to have been written, the one a little before, and the other a little after the time of our Saviour, make express and frequent mention of the vowel points; which argument would be unanswerable against the later invention of them, could we be sure, that these books are as ancient, as the Jews say they are. But there are reasons sufficient to convince us, † that both of them are of a much later date. There are many particulars in the books themselves, which manifestly prove

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\* Buxtorfius pater in Tiberiade c. 9. §. 3. Buxtorfius filius de punctorum antiquitate Part I, cap. 5. † Vide Arcanum punctuationis lib. 2. cap. 3. & Buxtorfii Bibliothecam Rabbinicam in Bahir et Zohar.



them to be so: and for above a thousand years after the pretended times of their composure, they were never heard of among the Jews themselves, nor were they ever quoted, or made mention of by any other writer during all that interval; which gives abundant reason to conclude that till after these thousand years, they never had any being; but that a false date of antiquity hath been fraudulently put to them to recommend them to the world with the greater credit. The latter of them hath been printed several times, but the other is still in manuscript. They are both Cabbalistical books, and the most they are remarkable for, is the obscurity of their style, and the strange, mysterious, and unintelligible stuff contained in them.

2. That whereas it is said on the other side, that the Masorites of Tiberias invented the vowel points above five hundred years after Christ, this ‡ appears very unlikely. For the Schools which the Jews had in Judæa, were then wholly dissipated and suppressed, and no learned men there left of sufficient ability for such a performance. For at that time all their learned men were removed into the province of Babylon, where they had their universities of Sora, Naherda, and Pumbeditha, and nothing of their learning was then left in Judæa, that can make it probable that such a work could be done, either at Tiberias or any where else in that land, in those times. And besides, were the thing ever so likely, there is no authority for it sufficient to support the assertion. Elias Levita indeed saith it, and Aben Ezra who wrote about the middle of the twelfth century, is quoted for it; but higher up it cannot be traced. For there is nothing said in any ancients writer either of their being invented by the Masorites at Tiberias, or any where else after the Talmud; and it is not likely that, if this had been so late an invention, a matter so remarkable, and of such great moment, could have been wholly passed over in silence without the least mention made of it by any of the Jewish writers. But ¶ to all this it is replied, that in historical matters it is not to be regarded what the Jews write, or what they omit concerning them. That of all nations in the world, that have pretended to any sort of learning, they have taken the least care to record past transactions, and have done it very bunglingly, and in a manner that looks more like fable than truth, wherever they have pretended to it. And it is certain there were Jews eminent in their way of learning at Tiberias in St Jerom's time. For he tells us he made use of them, and he died not till the year of our Lord 420, which was but eighty years before the time assigned; and it must be acknowledged that nothing of this can be gainsaid. And it is farther added by those, who thus reply, that

‡ Buxtorfius pater in Tiberiade cap. 5, 6. 7. Buxtorfius filius de antiquitate punctorum Part. 2. cap. 11.  
¶ Cappellus in Arcano punctationis lib. 2. cap. 15.

they do not positively pin down the invention of these vowel points either to the time or place, which Elias Levita assigneth for it, but only say, that it must be after the time of the writings of Jerom, and after the time of the composure of the Talmud, because in neither of these any mention is made of them, and this will necessarily carry it down below the five hundredth year of our Lord; but whether it were then immediately done, or two or three hundred years afterward, or at Tiberias, or elsewhere, they will not take upon them certainly to affirm. That the vowel points were not affixed to the text by Ezra, that they are not of a divine, but only of an human original, and first introduced into use after the writing of the Talmud, is all that they positively assert concerning this matter; and that whatsoever is said beyond this is only guess and conjecture, which doth not at all affect the question, and therefore they will not contend about it.

3. If by the Masorites, who are said to have invented these vowel points, are meant the authors of the present Masorah, which is printed with the great bibles of Venice and Basil, it is || certain they cannot be the inventors of these points. For a great part of their criticisms is upon the vowel points, which must necessarily prove them to have been long before fixed and settled. For none use to criticise upon their own works. To § which it is replied, that there were Masorites from the time of Ezra and the men of the great Synagogue, down to the time of Ben Asher and Ben Nephthali, who flourished about the year of our Lord 1030, that some of these invented the points sometime after the making of the Talmud, and that after that some of those who succeeded them, perchance two or three hundred years after, made these criticisms and remarks upon them. For the Masorah that is now printed in the bibles above mentioned, is a collection and abridgment of all the chief remarks and criticisms, which those men did make upon the Hebrew text, from their first beginning to the time I have mentioned. But of this I shall have occasion to speak more at large by and by.

4. That when the Hebrew language ceased to be the mother tongue of the Jews as it is agreed on all hands that it did after the Babylonish Captivity, it \* was scarce possible to teach that language without these vowel points; and this is the best and strongest argument, that is urged on this side for their having been always in use from that time.

5. That if it be allowed that the present vowel points are not of the same authority with the letters, but are only of a late and human invention, it will weaken the authority of the Holy Scriptures, and leave the sacred text to an arbitrary and uncertain reading and interpretation; which will give too much to the Papists, whose main design is to de-

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|| Buxtorfius pater in Tiberiade cap. 6. Buxtorfius filius de antiquitate punctorum Part 2. cap. 6. § Arcanum punctationis lib. 2. cap. 10. \* Buxtorfius de antiquitate punctorum Part. 2. cap. 10.

stroy the authority and certainty of the Holy Scriptures, that thereby they may make room for the traditions of their Church, and the decisions of the infallible guide, which they pretend to have therein. And to avoid this ill consequence is indeed the most prevailing cause, that hath drawn into this opinion most of those learned protestants, that contend for it; but to answer both these last arguments, and settle the whole of this controversy, I shall lay down what appears to me to be the truth of the matter, in these following positions.

I. That the vowel points having never been received by the Jews into their Synagogues, this seems to be a certain evidence, that they were never anciently looked on by them as an authentic part of the Holy Scripture of the Old Testament, but reckoned only as an human invention added for the easier reading of the text, after the Hebrew ceased from being a vulgar language among them. And the Jews having been till the time of Christ the true Church of God, and his chosen people, † to whom those Scriptures and sacred Oracles of God were given and committed, through their hands the Church of Christ hath received them, and their evidence is that, which is to witness and determine unto us, what part of them is authentic Scripture, and what is not.

II. It is most likely, that these vowel points were the invention of the Masorites a little after the time of Ezra. That they came into use a little after the time of Ezra seems to be proved by the need, that was then of them for the reading and teaching of the Hebrew text. And that they were invented by the Masorites seems most likely, because of the business and profession, which these men employed themselves in. For,

1st, These Masorites ‡ were a set of men, whose profession it was to write out copies of the Hebrew Scriptures, and to criticize upon them, and also to preserve and teach the true readings of them; and what they observed and taught in order hereto, is by the Jews called the Masorah. But this tradition reached no farther than the readings of the Hebrew Scriptures. For, as the Jews held a tradition of the true interpretations of the Holy Scriptures, (which I have already spoken of) so also did they hold another of the true readings of them, as in the original Hebrew language. And this last they will have, as to the law, to be a constitution of Moses from Mount Sinai, as well as the former. For their doctrine is, that when God gave unto Moses the law in Mount Sinai, he taught him first the true readings of it, and secondly the true interpretations of it; and that both these were handed down from generation to generation by oral tradition only, till at length the readings were written by the accents and vowels, in like manner as the interpretations were by the Mishna and Gemara. The former they call Masorah, which

† Romans iii, 2.

‡ Eliæ Levitæ Masoreth Hammasoreth. Buxtorfius in Tiberiade. Waltoni Prolegom. 8.



signifyeth tradition, and the other they call Cabbala, which signifyeth reception; but both of them denote the same thing, that is, a knowledge delivered down from generation to generation; in the doing of which there being tradition on the one hand, and reception on the other, that, which relates to the readings of the Hebrew Scriptures, hath its name from the former, and that which relates to the interpretations of them, from the latter. And what they say of this, as to the law, they say also of it, as to the Prophets and the rest of the Hebrew Scriptures; that is, that the true readings of them, as well as the true interpretations of them, were delivered down by oral tradition from those, who were the first penmen of them; to whom they say God revealed both at the same time, whom he revealed to them the word itself. As those, who studied and taught the Cabbala, were called the Cabbalists; so those, who studied and taught the Masorah, were called the Masorites. For although the word Cabbala be now restrained to signify the mystical interpretations of the Scriptures only, and in the common usage of speech now among the Jews they alone are called Cabbalists, who give themselves up to these dotages; yet in the true and genuine meaning of the word the Cabbala extends to all manner of traditions, which are of the interpretative part of the Hebrew Scriptures, and the Cabbalist is the general name of all those, who professed the study and knowledge of them. And they were all those, whom under the names of Tannaim, Amoraim, Seburaim, &c. I have already made mention of. And as these Cabbalists first began a little after the time of Ezra, so also did the Masorites; and their whole business, and profession being to study the true readings of the Hebrew text, and to preserve and teach the same, they are justly held the most likely to have invented the vowel points, because the whole use of those points is to serve to this purpose.

And 2dly, this use of them being absolutely necessary from the time that the Hebrew language ceased to be vulgarly spoken (as it certainly did in the time of Ezra) we have sufficient reason from hence to conclude, that soon after that time the use of them must have been introduced. For from this time the Hebrew language being only to be acquired by study and instruction, and that being necessary to be first acquired, before the sacred text could be read, which was written therein; as there was need of such a profession of men to take care hereof, that is, to teach and bring up others to know the language, and also to read the Scriptures, as written in it; so was there as much need of these vowel points to help them herein, it being hard to conceive, how they could do either without them, or some other such marks, that might serve them for the same purpose. What the Jews tell us of preserving the true readings only by tradition and memory, is too absurd to be swallowed by any one. For had there been nothing else but tradition and memory in this case to help them, the load would have been too great to have been carried by any one's memory, but all



must necessarily have dropp'd in the way, and been lost. But the truth is, there is no need of depending only on memory, in this case. For to those, who thoroughly know the language, the letters alone with the context are sufficient to determine the reading, as now they are in all other Hebrew books. For, excepting the Bible, few other books in that language are pointed. All their ¶ Rabbinical authors, of which there are a great number, are all unpointed, and yet all that understand the language, can read them without points, as well as if they had them, yea and much better too, and not miss the true reading. But the difficulty is as to those, who do not understand the language. For how they could be ever taught to read it without vowels, after it ceased to be vulgarly spoken, it is scarce possible to conceive. When all learnt it from their cradles, it was no hard matter for those, who thus understood the language, to learn to read it by the letters only without the vowels. But when the Hebrew became a dead language the case was altered. For then instead of understanding it first in order to read it, they were first to read it in order to understand it; and therefore having not the previous knowledge of the language to direct them herein, they must necessarily have had some other helps, whereby to know with what vowel every syllable was to be pronounced, and to give them this help, the vowel points seem certainly to have been invented; and therefore the time of this invention cannot be placed later than the time, when they became necessary, that is when the Hebrew became a dead language, though perchance it was not perfected and brought to that order, in which now it is, till some ages after. It is acknowledged on all hands, that the reading of the Hebrew language could never have been learned after it ceased to be vulgarly spoken, without the help of vowels; but they who will not allow the points to have been so ancient, ¶ tell us, that the letters Aleph, He, Vau, Yod, which they call *Matres Lectionis*, then served for vowels. But there are a great number of words in the Hebrew way of writing, both in the Bible and in all other books of that language, in which none of these letters are to be found, and scarce any in which some syllables are not without them, and how then can these supply the place of vowels, and every where help the reading instead of them, since every where they are not to be found? besides, there are none of these letters which have not, according as they are placed in different words, the different sounds of every one of the vowels some time or other annexed to them; and how then can they determine the pronunciation of any one of them? as for example, the letter Aleph hath not always the pronunciation of

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¶ All those authors as originally written are without points. But the Mishna and their Machzor have lately had points put to them, but still they are reckoned the best Editions that are without them.

¶ *Arcanum Punctuationis lib. 1. cap. 18:*

the vowel [a,] but sometimes of [e,] sometimes of [i,] sometimes of [o,] and sometimes of [u,] according as it is found in different words; and the same is to be said of all the rest. And farther, all the other oriental languages have in their Alphabets these same letters, which they call *Matres Lectionis*, as well as the Hebrew, as for example, the Syriac, the Arabic, the Turkish, the Persian, the Malayan, &c. and yet they have their vowels too to help the reading; neither can we find that they were ever without them; though such as are well versed in any of these languages, read them readily without vowels, and all the books, epistles, orders, and publick instruments, that are in them, are generally so written. And why then should we think the Hebrew had not such vowels also, especially when after that language had ceased to be vulgarly spoken, there was such necessity for them? The unpointed words in Hebrew are the same with abbreviations in Latin; and if it be impracticable for any novice to learn the Latin language by books, wherein all the words are so abbreviated, that only two or three letters of them stand for the whole, we may justly infer, that it is as impracticable for any who is a stranger to the Hebrew, ever to learn it by books, wherein all the words are unpointed; yea, and much more so. For the abbreviations in Latin are certain, such an abbreviation being always put for a word, and for none other; but it is otherwise in the abbreviations of the unpointed Hebrew, for in them all the vowels being left out, the remaining letters which are to stand for the whole, may, as pronounced with different vowels, be different words; as for example there are two Conjugations in Hebrew, one called *Pihel*, and the other *Puhel*; the former is an active, and the other a passive, and both are written throughout all their moods and tenses (except the infinite) with the same letters, and they as differently pointed may be either the one or the other; and although in the reading, the context may determine the active from the passive, yet if we do not by pointed books first learn, what vowels properly belong to the one, and what to the other, how can we know with which to read or pronounce either of them in the unpointed books? and abundance of other such instances may be given in the Hebrew language, wherein the same letters as differently pointed, make different words, and of different significations, and how then can a learner know, what different vowels, and what different pronunciations belong to these different words, if he be not first taught it by the points, or some other such marks of the same signification? All that can be said against this is, that the Samaritan hath no such vowels; but although it be now grown to be a dead language, as well as the Hebrew, it is taught and learnt without them. To this I answer, that it is true, that all the books, which we have as yet brought us into these Western Parts in the Samaritan character, are written only with the letters, and without any such marks, as the Hebrew bibles now have to denote the vowels, or any other instead of them. But this doth not prove, that they have no such vowels in use among them;

multitude of books are brought us out of the east in Hebrew, Syriac, Arabic, Turkish, and Persian, all written with the letters only without any vowel marks; but this doth not prove that they have none, for it's certain that they all have them, and use them, where there is need of them; and therefore it is no evidence, but that the Samaritan may have them also, though all the books which we have hitherto seen in it, are without them. The sect of the Samaritans are those only, who use this character and language (if we may call it a language, for it is no more than the Hebrew in another character) and they are now dwindled into a very small number, and those dispersed abroad into several parts of the east. And what their practice may be as to the use of vowel figures in their other writings (though none that have as yet come to our hands have any such) we have no account of, either pro or con, and therefore we can argue nothing from it. Only we say, that as to this, as well as the Hebrew, and all other such languages, in which books are ordinarily written with the letters only, it seems almost impracticable for any one to learn to read those books, after the languages are become dead languages, without some marks put to the letters to denote the vowels, with which they are to be pronounced. Without a previous knowledge of the language it is impossible to be done, and therefore the only way to make it possible, is to learn the Language first by rote, and when a perfect knowledge hath been gotten of it this way, then only can it be practicable to learn to read that language by the letters only without any vowel marks. But this is such a great way about, such a tedious and operose method of learning it, that we must look on those to be a very dull and stupid sort of people, who being in this case, could find out no other way to help themselves in it, and that especially in the Jews' case, since their neighbours on each side of them (I mean the Syrians and Arabians) had vowel figures, and they might easily from them either have taken the same, or learnt to have framed others like them. Though the Greeks in their language have the vowels intermixed with the letters, yet if no sooner became a dead language (I mean the learned Greek, from which the modern doth as much differ, as the Chaldee from the Hebrew) but they found out accents, spirits, and several other marks to help those who were to learn it, which were never in use among them before. And so also are there in the Latin several such marks; as for example, a mark over the [ò] and [è] at the end of adverbs, to distinguish them from nouns ending in those vowels, and the mark over the [â] ablative to distinguish it from the [a] nominative, &c. None of which marks were ever used, while the Latin language was vulgarly spoken, but were invented for the help of those, who were to learn it afterwards. And is it possible that the Jews only were so stupid and dull, that they alone should find out no such helps, after their language became a dead language, for the easier learning and reading of it; but on the contrary should have continued so many hundred years after, not only without any marks for accents, pauses or



stops, but also without any figures so much as to denote the vowels, with which their letters were to be pronounced? The necessity which was in this case for such vowel figures, evidently proves that they must have had them, and that as soon as they needed them, which was as soon as their language became a dead language, and was thenceforth to be learnt by books (and not by common converse) as all other dead languages are. And therefore this happening about the time of Ezra (as hath been already shewn) it must follow, that about that time, or a little after, the use of such vowel figures must have been introduced into the Hebrew Language. Whether they were the same vowel points that are now used, or other such like signs to serve for the same purpose, is not material, and therefore I shall raise no inquiry about it. Only I cannot but say, that since necessity first introduced the use of them, it is most likely, that no more were at first used, than there was a necessity for, but that the augmenting of them beyond this to the number of fifteen, proceeded only from the over-nicety of the after-Masorites. Three served the Arabs, and five most other nations, and no doubt at first they exceeded not this number among the Jews. And it is most likely that the same profession of men, who thus invented the vowel points, were also the authors of all those other inventions, which have been added to the Hebrew text for the easier reading and better understanding of it. The dividing of the law into sections, and the sections into verses, seems to have been one of the first of their works.† Originally every book of the Hebrew Bible was written as in one verse, without any distinction of sections, chapters, verses or words. But when the publick reading of the law was brought into use among the Jews, and some part of it read every sabbath in their synagogues, it became necessary to divide the whole into 54 sections, that it might thereby be known, what part was to be read on each sabbath, and the whole gone over every year, as hath been afore observed. And when the disuse of the Hebrew language among them made it necessary, that it should not only be read to them in the original Hebrew, but also interpreted in the Chaldee, which was then become their vulgar tongue, there was also a necessity of dividing the sections into verses, that they might be a direction both to the reader and the interpreter where to make their stop at every alternative reading and interpreting, till they had verse by verse gone through the whole section. And in imitation hereof, the like division was afterwards made in all the rest of the Holy Scriptures. And a like necessity about the same time introduced the use of the vowel points, after they were forced to teach the Hebrew language by book, on its ceasing to be any longer vulgarly spoken among the people. And some time after the accents and pauses were invented for the same purpose, that is, for the easier and more distinct reading of the text, for which they are

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† Elias Levita in Masoreth Hammasoreth.



helps, as far as they supply the place of a comma, a colon, or a full stop (which Athnak, Revia, and Silluk do) but as for the musical use, for which only the others were added to the Hebrew text, they are now wholly insignificant, it being long since absolutely forgot for what use they served.

III. These vowel points were many ages only of private use among the Masorites, whereby they preserved to themselves the true readings of the Holy Scriptures, and taught them to their scholars; but they were not received into the divinity schools, till after the making of the Talmud. For there were two sorts of Schools anciently among the Jews, the schools of the Masorites, and the schools of the Rabbis. The former taught only the Hebrew language, and to read the scriptures in it, the others to understand the scriptures, and all the interpretations of them, and were the great doctors of divinity among them, to whom the Masorites were as much inferior, as the teachers of grammar schools among us are to the professors of divinity in our universities. And therefore as long as these vowel points went no higher, than the schools of these Masorites, they were of no regard among their learned men, nor taken any notice of by them. And this is the reason that we find no mention of them either in the Talmud, or in the writings of Origen or Jerom. But some time after the making of the Talmud, in what year or age is uncertain, the punctuation of the Masorites having been judged by the Jewish doctors to be as useful and necessary a way for the preserving of the traditionary readings of the Hebrew scriptures, as the Mishnah and Gemara had been then found to be for the preserving of the traditional rites, ceremonies, and doctrines of their religion, it was taken into their divinity schools; and it having been there reviewed and corrected by the learnedest of their Rabbis, and so formed and settled by them, as to be made to contain and mark out all those authentic readings, which they held to have been delivered down unto them by tradition from Moses and the prophets, who were the first penmen of them; ever since that time the points in the Hebrew scriptures have been by the Jews held of the same authority for the reading of them, as the Mishna and the Gemara for the interpreting of them, and consequently as unalterable as the letters themselves. For they reckon them both of divine original, only with this difference, that the letters, they say, were written by the holy penmen themselves, but the readings as now marked by the points, were delivered down from them by tradition only. However they have never received them into their synagogues, but have there still continued the use of the Holy Scriptures in unpointed copies, and so do even to this day, because they so received them from the first holy penmen of them.

IV. All those criticisms in the Masorah, that are upon the points, were made by such Masorites as lived after the points were received into the divinity schools of the Jews. For this profession of men continued

from the time of Ezra, and the men of the great synagogue, to that of Ben Asher and Ben Nephthali, ‡ who were two famous Masorites, that lived about the year of our Lord 1030, and were the last of them. For they having, after many years' labour spent herein, each of them published a copy of the whole Hebrew text, as correct as they could make it, the eastern Jews have followed that of Ben Nephthali, and the Western Jews have followed that of Ben Asher, and all that hath been done ever since is exactly to copy after them, both as to the points and accents, as well as to the letters, without making any more corrections or Masoritical criticisms or observations upon either. These Masorites, who were the authors of the Masorah that is now extant, were a monstrous trifling sort of men, whose criticisms and observations went no higher, than the numbering of the verses, words, and letters, of every book in the Hebrew bible, and the marking out which was the middle verse, word, and letter in each of them, and the making of other such poor and low observations concerning them, as are not worth any man's reading, or taking notice of, whatever Richard Simon the Frenchman may say to the contrary.

V. These vowel points having been added to the text with the best care of those who best understood the language, and having undergone the review and correction of many ages, it may be reckoned that this work hath been done in the perfectest manner that it can be done by man's art, and that none who shall undertake a new punctuation of the whole, can do it better; however since it was done only by man's art, it is no authentic part of the holy scriptures, and therefore these points are not so unalterably fixed to the text, but that a change may be made in them, when the nature of the context, or the analogy of grammar, or the style of the language, or any thing else shall give a sufficient reason for it. And that especially since, how exactly soever they may have been at any time affixed to the text, they are still liable to the mistakes of transcribers and printers, and by reason of their number, the smallness of their figures, and their position under the letters, are more likely to suffer by them, than any other sort of writing whatsoever.

VI. It doth not from hence follow, that the sacred text will therefore be left to an arbitrary and uncertain reading. For the genuine reading is as certain in the unpointed Hebrew books, as the genuine sense is in the pointed; the former indeed may sometimes be mistaken or perverted and so may the latter; and therefore whether the books be pointed or unpointed, this doth not alter the case to one who thoroughly knows the language, and will honestly read the same. Ignorant men may indeed mistake the reading, and ill men may pervert it: but those who are know-

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‡ Buxtorfius pater in præfatione ad Tiberiadem. Buxtorfius filius de antiquitate punctorum, Part I. cap. 15. Zacutus in Juchasin. Shalsheleth Haccabala, Zemach David, Elias Levita, &c.

ing and honest can do neither. For, except the bible, no other Hebrew book is pointed, unless some few of late by modern hands. All their rabbinical authors are unpointed, and all their other books, to which the moderns have in some editions added points, were originally published without them, and so they still are in the best editions : and yet this doth not hinder, but that every one who understands the Hebrew language, can rightly read them and rightly understand them. Were I to make my choice, I would desire to have the bible with points, and all other Hebrew books without them. I would desire the bible with points, because they tell us how the Jews did anciently read the text. And I would have all other Hebrew books without them, because in such they rather hinder and clog the reading, than help it, to any one that thoroughly knows the language. And all that undertake to point such books, may not always do it according to the true and genuine reading, as we have an instance in the pointed edition of the Mishnah published in octavo by Manasseh Ben Israel at Amsterdam. And therefore it is much better to be left free to our own apprehensions for the genuine reading, than be confined by another man's to that which may not be the genuine reading. Indeed to read without vowels may look very strange to such, who are conversant only with the modern European languages, in which often several consonants come together without a vowel, and several vowels without a consonant, and several of both often go to make up one syllable, and therefore if in them the consonants were only written, it would be hard to find out what may be the word ; but it is quite otherwise in the Hebrew. For in that language there is never more than one vowel in one syllable, and in most syllables only one consonant, and in none more than two, and therefore in most words the consonants confine us to the vowels, and determine how the word is to be read, and if not, at least the context doth. It must be acknowledged, that there are several combinations of the same consonants, which as placed in the same order, are susceptible of different punctuations, and thereby make different words and of different significations, and therefore when put alone are of an uncertain reading ; but it is quite otherwise when they are joined in context with other words. For where the letters joined in the same word do not determine the reading, there the words joined in the same sentence always do ; and this is no more than what we find in all other languages, and very often in our own. For we have many equivocal words, which being put alone are of an uncertain signification, but are always determin'd in the context. As for example, the word *Let* in English when put alone by itself, hath not only two different, but two quite contrary meanings. For it signifies to permit, and it signifies also to hinder ; but it never doth so in the context, but is thereby always so determined either to the one or to the other, that no one is ever led into a mistake hereby. And the same is to be said of all such words in Hebrew, as having the same letters are



susceptible of various punctuations. The letters here cannot determine to the punctuation, because they being in each the same, are indifferent to either. But what the letters cannot do, when the word is put alone by itself, that the other words always do, with which it is joined in the context. And it is want of attention, or want of apprehension, if any one thoroughly skill'd in the Hebrew language makes a mistake herein ; which may happen in the reading of any other books whatsoever. And therefore though the Hebrew bibles had never been pointed, we need not be sent either to the Church of Rome, or any where else, for the fixing of the readings of it, the letters alone with the context being sufficient, when we thoroughly understand the language, to determine us thereto.

There is in the \* Church of St Dominic in Bononia a copy of the Hebrew Scriptures, kept with a great deal of care, which they pretend to be the original copy written by Ezra himself ; and therefore it is there valued at so high a rate, that great sums of money have been borrowed by the Bononians upon the pawn of it, and again repaid for its redemption. It is written in a very fair character upon a sort of leather, and made up in a roll according to the ancient manner ; but it having the vowel points annexed, and the writing being fresh and fair without any decay, both these particulars prove the novelty of that copy.

##### 5. ON THE TARGUMS OR CHALDEE PARAPHRASES.

*From the same work, Part II, vol. ii,*

*page 531.*

The Chaldee paraphrases are translations of the scriptures of the Old Testament made directly from the Hebrew text into the language of the Chaldæans, which language was anciently used through all Assyria, Babylonia, Mesopotamia, Syria, and Palestine ; and is still the language of the churches of the Nestorian and Maronite Christians in those eastern parts, in the same manner as the Latin is the language of the popish churches here in the west. And therefore these paraphrases are

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\* Fini Adriani Flagellum Judæorum lib. 9. c. 2. Tissardi Ambacei Grammatica Hebræa. Hottingeri Thesaurus Philologicus p. 115 & p. 513.



called \* Targums, because they were versions or translations of the Hebrew text into this language. For the word Targum signifieth in Chaldee an interpretation or version of one language into another, and may properly be said of any such version or translation; but it is most commonly by the Jews appropriated to these Chaldee paraphrases. For being among them what were most eminently such, they therefore had this name by way of eminency especially given unto them.

These arguments were made for the use and instruction of the vulgar Jews after their return from the Babylonish captivity. For altho' many of the better sort still retained the knowledge of the Hebrew language during that captivity, and taught it their children; and the holy scriptures that were delivered after that time,† excepting only some parts of Daniel and Ezra and one verse in Jeremiah, were all written therein; yet the common people by having so long conversed with the Babylonians learned their language, and forgot their own. It happened indeed otherwise to the children of Israel in Egypt. For altho' they lived there above three times as long as the Babylonish captivity lasted, yet they still preserved the Hebrew language among them, and brought it back entire with them into Canaan. The reason of this was, in Egypt they all lived together in the land of Goshen; but on their being carried captive by the Babylonians, they were dispersed all over Chaldæa and Assyria, and being there intermixed with the people of the land had their main converse with them, and therefore were forced to learn their language, and this soon induced a disuse of their own among them; by which means it came to pass, that after their return the common people, especially those of them who had been bred up in that captivity, understood not the holy scriptures in the Hebrew language, nor their posterity after them. And therefore when Ezra read the law to the people,‡ he had several persons standing by him well skill'd in both the Chaldee and Hebrew languages, who interpreted to the people in Chaldee what he first read to them in Hebrew. And afterwards when the method was established of dividing the law into 54 sections, and of reading one of them every week in their synagogues (according as hath been already described) the same course of reading to the people the Hebrew text first, and then interpreting it to them in Chaldee, was still continued. For when the reader had read one verse in Hebrew, an interpreter standing by did render it in Chaldee, and then the next verse being read in Hebrew, it was in like manner interpreted in the same

\* Buxtorfii Lexicon Rabbinicum Col. 2644. † The Book of Daniel is written in Chaldee from the 4th verse of the second Chapter to the end of the 7th Chapter, and the Book of Ezra from the 8th verse of the 4th Chapter to the 27th verse of the 7th Chapter. In the Book of Jeremiah the 11th verse of the 10th Chapter is only written in that Language, all the rest of it is in Hebrew.

‡ Nehemiah viii. 4—8.

language as before, and so on from verse to verse was every verse alternatively read first in Hebrew, and then interpreted in Chaldee to the end of the section; and this first gave occasion for the making of Chaldee versions for the help of these interpreters. And they thenceforth became necessary not only for their help in the public synagogues, but also for the help of the people at home in their families, that they might there have the scriptures for their private reading in a language which they understood.

For first as synagogues multiplied among the Jews beyond the number of able interpreters, it became necessary that such versions should be made for the help of the less able. This was done at first only for the law, because at first the law only was publicly read in their synagogues till the persecution of Antiochus Epiphanes, but after that time lessons being read out of the prophets in those religious assemblies, as well as out of the law, the same reason rendered it necessary, that Chaldee versions should be made of these scriptures also. And 2dly, the use of the people (which was the other reason for the composing of those versions) made this necessary for all the scripture, as well as for the law and Prophets. For all scripture being given for our edification, all ought for this end to have them in a language which they understood. For when God gave his law unto Israel,<sup>¶</sup> he enjoined, that they should have his commandments, statutes and judgments always in their hearts, that they should meditate on them day and night, teach them their children, and talk of them, when they did sit in their houses, and when they walked by the way, and when they lay down, and when they rose up; and that all might be the better enabled to perform all this, it was strictly enjoined by a constitution of the elders from ancient times,<sup>||</sup> that every man should have by him at his home a copy of the Holy Scriptures fairly written out either by his own, or if he could not write himself, by some other hand, for his instruction herein. But how could this be done, if they had those Scriptures only in a language, which they did not understand? It was necessary therefore, that as they had the Hebrew text for the sake of the original, so also that they should have the Chaldee version for the sake of helping them to understand it. Indeed the letter of the law which commands what I have here mentioned, extends no further than to the five books of Moses: for no more of the Holy Scriptures were then written, when that law was given; and also the constitution above-mentioned, which was superadded by the elders, is by positive words limited thereto. But the reason of the thing reacheth the whole word of God. For since all of it is given for our instruction, we are all

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<sup>¶</sup> Deuteron. vi. 6—9. & Ch. xi. 18, 19, 20.  
cap. 7.

<sup>||</sup> Maimonides in Tephil.

equally obliged to know each part of it, as well as the other. And therefore this caused, that at length the whole Scriptures were thus translated from the Hebrew into the Chaldean language for the sake of those who could not otherwise understand them. For to lock up from the people in an unknown language that word of God, which was given to lead them to everlasting life, was a thing that was not thought agreeable either with reason or piety in those times.

This work having been attempted by diverse persons at different times, and by some of them with different views (for some of them were written as versions for the publick use of the synagogues, and others as paraphrases and commentaries for the private instruction of the people) hence it hath come to pass, that there were anciently many of these Targums, and of different sorts, in the same manner as there anciently were many versions of the same Holy Scriptures into the Greek language, made with like different views; of which we have sufficient proof in the Octapla of Origen. No doubt anciently there were many more of these Targums, than we now know of, which have been lost in the length of time. Whether there were any of them of the same composure on the whole scriptures is not any where said. Those that are now remaining were composed by different persons, and on different parts of Scripture, some on one part, and others on other parts, and are in all of these eight sorts following; 1. That of Onkelos on the five books of Moses. 2. That of Jonathan Ben Uzziel on the prophets, that is on Joshua, Judges, the two books of Samuel, the two books of Kings, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the twelve minor prophets. 3. That on the law which is ascribed to Jonathan Ben Uzziel. 4. The Jerusalem Targum on the law. 5. The Targum on the five lesser books called the Megilloth, i. e. Ruth, Esther, Ecclesiastes, The Song of Solomon, and the Lamentations of Jeremiah. 6. The second Targum on Esther. 7. The Targum § of Joseph the one-eyed on the book of Job, the Psalms, and the Proverbs, and 8. The Targum on the first and second book of Chronicles. On Ezra, Nehemiah and Daniel, there is no Targum at all. The reason given by some for this is, because a great part of those books is written in the Chaldee language, and therefore is no need of a Chaldee paraphrase upon them. This indeed is true for Daniel and Ezra, but not for Nehemiah. For that book is all originally written in the Hebrew language. No doubt anciently there were Chaldee paraphrases on all the Hebrew parts of those books, though now lost. It was long supposed that there were no Targums

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§ He is commonly called Josephus Cæcus, or Josephus the blind. This is not to be understood as if he were blind of both eyes, for then he could not have done this work. The word in Hebrew, by which he is so denominated, signifieth Luscum one that is blind of one eye, as well as Cæcum, one that is blind of both eyes.



on the two books of Chronicles, because none such were known, till \* they were lately published by Beckius at Augsburg in Germany, that on the first book, Anno Domini 1680, and that on the second Anno 1683.

As the Targum of Onkelos is the first in order of place, as being on the Pentateuch, which is the first part of the Holy Scriptures; so I think it is not to be doubted, but that it is the first also in order of time, and the ancientest that was written of all that are now extant. The † Jewish writers, though they allow him to have been for some time of his life contemporary with Jonathan Ben Uzziel the author of the second Targum above-mentioned, yet make him much the younger of the two. For they tell us that Jonathan was one of the prime scholars of Hillel, who died about the time when our Saviour was born; but that Onkelos survived Gamaliel the elder, Paul's master (who was the grandson of Hillel, and died not till eighteen years before the destruction of Jerusalem) for they relate, that Onkelos assisted at the funeral of this Gamaliel, and provided for it seventy pound of frankincense at his own charge. But there are several reasons which prevail with me to think Onkelos the ancier of the two; the chief and principalest of them is the style, in which his Targum is written. That part of Daniel and Ezra, which is in Chaldee, is the truest standard, whereby to try the purity of the Chaldee language. For this language, as well as all others, being in a constant flux, and in every age deviating from what it was in the former, it follows from hence, that the further any Chaldee writing doth in its style differ from that ancient standard, the later certainly it is; and the nearer it comes to it, we may as certainly conclude, the ancier it is. But no Chaldee writing now extant coming nearer to the style of what is written in that language by Daniel and Ezra, than the Targum of Onkelos, this to me proves that Targum of all others to be the most ancient. And I can see no other reason, why Jonathan Ben Uzziel, when he undertook to compose his Targum should pass over the law, and begin with the prophets, but that he found Onkelos had done this work before him, and with that success in the performance, which he could not exceed. This Targum of Onkelos is rather a version, than a paraphrase. For it renders the Hebrew text word for word, and for the most part accurately and exactly, and it is by much the best of all this sort. And therefore it has always been had in esteem among the Jews much above all the other Targums, and being set to the same musical notes with the Hebrew text, it is thereby made capable of being read in the same tone with it in their publick

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\* Leusden in philologo Hebræo-mixto dissertatione 5ta sect. 5.

† Zacutus in Juchasin. Gedaliah in Shalsheth Habbabbala. David Ganz in Zemach David, aliique.



assemblies. And that it was accordingly there read alternatively with the text in the manner as is above described ‡ Elias Levita tells us, who of all the Jews, that have handled this argument, hath written the most accurately and fully of it. For he saith, “that the Jews holding themselves obliged every week in their synagogues to read twice that Parashah or section of the law, which was the lesson of the week (that is in the Hebrew original first, and then in the Chaldee interpretation after it) made use of the Targum of Onkelos for this purpose; and that this was their usage even down to his time (which was ¶ about the first part of the sixteenth century.) And that for this reason, though till the art of printing was invented there were of the other Targums scarce above one or two of a sort to be found in a whole country; yet then the Targum of Onkelos was every where among them.” Some say this Onkelos was a proselyte, and hold him to have been the same with Akilas, another proselyte, who is quoted in || Berishith Rabba to have written a Targum; and others, that he was the same with Aquila of Pontus, who composed one of the Greek versions of the holy Scripture, which was in Origen’s Octapla, as if the Akilas mentioned in Berishith Rabba, and Aquila of Pontus, were two distinct persons. For the setting of all this at rights it is to be observed, 1. That the Akilas, whose Targum is quoted in Berishith Rabba, and elsewhere from it by the Rabbins, can be none other than Aquila of Pontus. For the name is the same, *Ἀκύλας* in Greek, and Akilas in Hebrew; the time in which they are said to live, is also the same, that is about the year of Christ one hundred and thirty; and both are said to be proselytes; and these three characters joined together sufficiently prove them to be both the same person. 2. That this Akilas could not be Onkelos. For not only the names are different, and the times in which they lived different, but also the Targums, which they are said to have written. For Onkelos wrote on the law, but the Targum of Akilas, which is quoted in Berishith Rabba, is on the Prophets, and the Hagiographa. 3. That the Targum of Akilas quoted by the author of Berishith Rabba, and other Rabbins from him, is not a Chaldee Targum, but the Greek version or Targum made by Aquila of Pontus. For although the word Targum be restrained by its most common use among the Jews to the Chaldee versions of the Hebrew Scriptures, yet

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‡ In Methurgeman, i. e. Lexico Chaldaico sic dicto. Verba ejus in præfatione ad illud Lexicon sunt hæc sequentia. Antequam inveniretur ars typographica non extabant Targum prophetarum et hagiographorum, nisi vel unum in provincia, vel ad summum duo in universo climate. Propterea nec quisquam erat qui ea curaret. At Targum Onkelosi semper repertum est affatim, et hoc ideo, quia nos obligati sumus, ut legamus quavis septimana parasham bis, i. e. semel in textu Hebræo, et semel in Targum.

¶ Some of his books were published anno 1517, and some anno 1539.

|| Berishith Rabba is an old Rabbinical commentary on the book of Genesis.

in its general signification it takes in any translation from one language to another, whatsoever those languages may be; and that therefore there was never any such Chaldee Targum, as is supposed to be quoted by the author of Berishith Rabba, or any such person as Akilas a proselyte distinct from Aquila of Pontus to be the author of it; but that the Targum so quoted was the Greek Targum, or Greek version of the Hebrew Scriptures made by the said Aquila of Pontus, of which I have above given a full account. 4. That the representing of Onkelos to have been a proselyte, seems to have proceeded from the error of taking him to have been the same with Aquila of Pontus, who was indeed a Jewish Proselyte. For having from being an heathen embraced the Christian religion, he apostatised from it to the Jews. The excellency and accuracy of Onkelos's Targum sufficiently prove him to have been a native Jew. For without being bred up from his birth in the Jewish religion and learning, and long exercised in all the rites and doctrines thereof, and being also thoroughly skill'd in both the Hebrew and Chaldee languages, as far as a native Jew could be, he can scarce be thought thoroughly adequate to that work, which he performed.

The next Targum to that of Onkelos is the Targum of Jonathan Ben Uzziel on the prophets, which is next it also in the purity of its style, but is not like it in the manner of its composure. For whereas the Targum of Onkelos is a strict version, rendering the Hebrew text word for word, Jonathan takes on him the liberty of a paraphrast by enlargements and additions to the text. For therein are inserted several stories, and also several glosses of his own, which do not much commend the work; and more of this is to be found in that part which is on the later prophets, than in that which is on the former. For in that latter part he is more lax and paraphrastical, and less accurate and clear, than in the other. The books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings are called the former prophets, and the books of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the twelve minor prophets the latter. The § Jews speak highly of this Jonathan. For they do not only give him the first place of eminency among all the disciples of Hillel, but equal him even to Moses himself, and tell many miraculous things of him, which they say happened while he was employed in this work. As, that nothing was permitted to give him any disturbance herein. That if any bird happened to flee over him, or any fly to light upon his paper, while he was writing this Targum, they were immediately burnt up by fire from heaven without any hurt done either to his person or his paper. And they tell us also, that on his attempting to write a Targum upon the Hagiographa

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§ Zacutus in Juchasin. Gedaliah in Shalsheth Haccabbala, David Ganz in Zemach David. Talmud in Bava Bathra cap. 8, et in Succa, et in Megilla. Videas etiam Buxtorfium de abbreviaturis p. 104, et 105. et in præfatione ad lexicon Chaldaicum. Sckickardum in Bechinath Happerushim, aliosque.

after his having finished that on the law, he was hindered by a voice from heaven, which forbid him to proceed in that work, giving this reason for it, because therein (that is in the Hagiographa) was contained the end of the Messiah, which some Christians laying hold of against the Jews by interpreting it of the death of Christ predicted in the prophetes of Daniel (which they place among the \* Hagiographa) some of the latter Jews have taken upon them to alter that passage, for fear this fabulous story should hurt their cause. Many other fables the Jewish writers tell us of this Jonathan and his Targum, which I think not proper to trouble the reader with.

The third Targum in the order above-mentioned is that on the Law, which is ascribed to Jonathan Ben Uzziel. But that it is none of his is sufficiently proved by the style, which is wholly different from that, wherein is written the true Targum of Jonathan (that upon the Prophets, which all allow to have been his) as will thoroughly appear to such as shall thoroughly compare them together; and besides its enlargements in the paraphrastical way by glosses, fables, prolix explications, and other additions are much beyond what we find practised by Jonathan in that Targum, which is truly his. But that which thoroughly cuts the throat of this pretence is, that there are several things mentioned in this Targum, which had no being, or at least no name, till after Jonathan's time. For therein is mention made † of the six orders or books of the Mishnah; but they could have no being till the Mishna was made by R. Judah near two hundred years after Jonathan's time; and therein we also find mention made ‡ of Constantinople and ¶ Lombardy, whereas there was no such city as Constantinople, nor any country called by the name of Lombardy till several hundred years after the time, wherein Jonathan flourished. Who was the true author of this Targum, or when it was composed, is utterly unknown. It seems long to have lain in obscurity among the Jews themselves. For Elias Levita, who wrote most fully of the Chaldee paraphrases, knew nothing of this paraphrase, for he says nothing of it, though he tells us of all the rest; neither was it taken notice of till published in print at Venice about an hundred and fifty years since; and the name of Jonathan, it's probable, was for no other reason then put to it, but to give it the more credit, and the better to recommend it by that specious title to the buyer. Most of those prophetes which are in the Pentateuch concerning the Messiah, being in this Targum interpreted in the Christian way, some Christians for this reason would maintain it to be the genuine work of the author, whose name it bears; and to make this out assert it to be as ancient as that

\* That the Jews allow not Daniel a place among the prophets, and for what reason, hath been above shewn, part I, book 3, under the year 534.

† Exod. xxvi. 9.

‡ Num. xxiv. 19.

¶ Num. xxiv. 24.



author, and that therefore it might according to its title be truly his; and their argument for it is, that it is quoted by St Paul, and that therefore it must be composed before his time; and the age before his time was that, in which Jonathan Ben Uzziel lived. For whereas St Paul in his second epistle to Timothy, iii, 8, makes mention of Jannes and Jambres as the names of those Egyptian magicians, who withstood Moses in the presence of Pharaoh (Exodus vii, 2.), they would have it believed, that Paul had those names from this Targum on the law which is ascribed to Jonathan; and that therefore it was composed before St Paul wrote that epistle to Timothy. It's true the names of Jannes and Jambres are twice made mention of in this Targum (Exodus i, 15, and vii, 2,) but it doth not follow, that St Paul had them from this Targum, and that therefore the author of this Targum was ancients than St Paul, any more than it doth, that he had them from Pliny or Numenius, and that therefore these two heathen philosophers were, contrary to all the faith of history, ancients than this apostle. For both these authors make mention of those Egyptian magicians in the time of Moses with this only variation, that instead of Jannes and Jambres Pliny writes their names Jamnes and Jotapes. The true answer hereto is, that as the sacred penmen of the new Testament make mention of several things which they had only from the current tradition of the times in which they lived, so this of Jannes and Jambres was of that sort. These names either by oral tradition, or rather by some written records of history, being preserved among the Jews, Paul from thence had them. And an account of these persons having been by the said names propagated by the Jews to the heathens, among whom they were dispersed, it came this way to the knowledge of Pliny and Numenius, the first of which lived in the first century of Christ, and the other in the beginning of the third. They that would know, what were the traditions of the Jews concerning these two magicians, may consult Buxtorf's Rabbinical Lexicon, p. 945, 946, and 947, for there they will find a full account of all that is said of them in the Talmud, and other Rabbinical writings, which being long and wholly fabulous, I avoid here troubling the reader with it.

The fourth Targum is on the law, written by an unknown hand. For no one pretends to tell us, who the author of it was, or when it was composed. It is called the Jerusalem Targum; and seems to have that name for the same reason for which the Jerusalem Talmud is so called, that is because it is written in the Jerusalem dialect. For there were || three different dialects of the Chaldaean or Assyrian language. The first was that, which was spoken at Babylon the metropolis of the Assyrian empire, an example of this in its greatest

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|| Videas Waltoni prolegom. xiii, ad biblia polyglot. et Georgii Amyræ præhud. gram. Syr.



purity we have in Daniel and Ezra, and the style of the Babylonish Gemara may be reckoned its highest corruption. The second dialect of this language was the Commagenian or Antiochian, which was spoken in Commagene, Antioch, and the rest of Syria; and in this dialect were written the versions of the Holy Scriptures, and the liturgies, which were in use among the Syrian and Assyrian Christians, and are still used by them, especially by the Maronites, a people inhabiting mount Libanus, where the Syriac still lives among them as a vulgar language. The third dialect was the Jerusalem dialect, that which was spoken by the Jews after their return from Babylon. The Babylonian and Jerusalem dialects were written in the same character, but the Antiochian in a different, that which we call the Syriac. And for the sake of this different character is that dialect reckoned a different language, which we call the Syriac, § whereas in truth the Syriac and the Chaldee are one and the same language, in different characters, and differing a little only in dialect. As all these three dialects were made by so many several degeneracies from the old Assyrian language, which was anciently spoken in Nineveh and Babylon, so they all with time degenerated from what they at first were. The purest style which we have of the Jerusalem dialect, is in the Targums first of Onkelos on the law, and next of Jonathan on the prophets. For in them the Chaldee is without any mixture of words from any other language, saving from the Hebrew only. This mixture of Hebrew words with the Chaldee was that only, which first made the Jerusalem dialect to differ from the Babylonian. For though the Jews on their return from Babylon brought back with them the Chaldee language, and made it their vulgar tongue, yet the Hebrew was still the language of the Church, and the language of all those that were bred up in learning for its service; and therefore many of its words crept into the Chaldee, which was vulgarly spoken by them, and this mixture constituted the Jerusalem dialect of the Chaldee tongue; and as long as it continued with this mixture only, it was the Jerusalem dialect in its best purity. But in process of time the mixture of the Jews with other nations, especially after our Saviour's time, brought in the mixture of many exotic words from the Latin, Greek, Arabian, Persian, and other languages, and thereby so far corrupted their former speech, that it made it almost another language. And a view of this corrupt state of it we have in the Jerusalem Talmud, the Jerusalem Targum, and in all other Targums, excepting those of Onkelos on the law, and Jonathan on the prophets. For all these are written in this corrupt style of the Jerusalem dialect, and those Targums are much more so than the Jerusalem Talmud, which proves them all (except the two above

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§ Videas præfationem Ludovici de Dieu ad Grammaticam Linguarum Orientalium.

excepted) to have been written after that Talmud. This Jerusalem Targum is not a continued paraphrase, as all the rest are, but only upon some parts here and there, as the author thought the text most wanted an explication. For sometimes it is only upon one verse, sometimes only upon a piece of verse, and sometimes upon several verses together, and sometimes it skips over whole chapters. In many places it writes word for word from the Targum said to be Jonathan's on the law, which made \* Drusius think they were both the same. There are several things in this Jerusalem Targum, which are in the same words delivered in the new Testament by Christ and his apostles. As for example, Luke vi, 38, Christ saith With the same measure that ye mete withal, it shall be measured to you again. The same is in this Targum, Gen. xxxviii, 26. In the Revelations xx, 6. 14. there is mention of the first and second death, the same distinction is in this Targum, Deuteron. xxxiii. 6. In the Revelations v. 10, the saints are said to be made unto our God, Kings and Priests; the same is said in this Targum, Exodus xix. 6. In the gospel of St. Matthew vi. 9. our Saviour teacheth us to say, Our Father which art in Heaven; the same expression is in this Targum, Deut. xxxii. 6. Hence some would infer the antiquity of this Targum, as if it had been written before our Saviour's time, and that he and his apostles had these and like other expressions from it; and others will have it, that the Author of this Targum had them from the new Testament. But neither of these seems likely; not the first, because the style of this Targum being more impure and corrupt, than that of the Jerusalem Talmud, this proves it to have been composed after that Talmud, which had no being till above three hundred years after Christ; and not the second, because the Jews had that detestation of all contained in the new Testament, that we may be well assured, they would borrow nothing from thence. The truth of the matter most probably is, these were sayings and phraseologies, which had obtained among the Jews in our Saviour's time, and continued among them long after, and hence our Saviour and his apostles, and afterward the author of this Targum had them, as from the same fountain.

The fifth Targum, which is that on the Megilloth, the sixth which is the second Targum on Esther; and the seventh, which is that on Job, the Psalms and the Proverbs, are all written in the corruptest Chaldee of the Jerusalem Dialect. Of the two former no author is named; but the author of the third they say was Joseph the one-eyed, but who this Joseph was, or when he lived, is not said; and some of them † tell us the author of this Targum is as much unknown, as of the other two. The second Targum on Esther is twice as large as the

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\* Ad difficilia Loca, Num. cap. 25.

† R. Azarias in Meor Enaim, Elias Levita, aliique.

first, and seems to have been written the last of all those Targums, by reason of the barbarity of its style. That on the Megilloth, (part of which is the first Targum on Esther) makes mention of the \* Mishnah and the Talmud with the explication; if thereby be meant the Babylonish Talmud, as undoubtedly it is, this Targum must have been written after that Talmud, that is after the year of Christ 500. For this is the earliest time which is assigned for the composure of the Babylonish Talmud.

The eighth and last of these Targums in the order I have above-mentioned them is that on the two books of the Chronicles, which is the last that hath been published. For it was not known of till the year 1680, † when Beckius from an old manuscript first published at Augsburg in Germany that part of it, which is on the first book; and three years after he published at the same place the other part also, that which is on the second book. Till then all, that have written of the Chaldee Paraphrases, have given us to understand, as if there had never been any Targum at all written upon these books. But only Walton ‡ tells us, he had heard, that there was in the publick library in Cambridge a manuscript Targum on the Chronicles, but had no notice of it till his Polyglot was finished, and therefore never examined it. I find there is ¶ in that library among Erpenius's books bought by the Duke of Buckingham, and given to that university, a manuscript Hebrew bible in three volumes, which hath a Chaldee Targum on the Chronicles as far as the sixth verse of the 22nd Chapter of the first book. But it is no continued Targum, for it contains no more than some short glosses added here and there in the margin. This manuscript was written in the year of Christ 1347, as appears by a note at the end of it, but when or by whom the marginal Chaldee Gloss therein was composed is not said.

That the Targums of Onkelos on the law, and Jonathan on the prophets, are as ancient as our Saviour's time, if not ancients, is the general opinion of both Jews and Christians; || the Jewish Historians positively say it. For they tell us that Jonathan was the most eminent of all the scholars of Hillel, § who died about the time that our Saviour was born, and that Onkelos was contemporary with Gamaliel the elder (the same that was St Paul's master) as is above-mentioned. For altho' the Jewish writers are very wretched historians, and often give us gross fables instead of true narratives, yet whenever they do so

\* Cant. i. 2.

† Leusdeni Philologus mixtus dissertatione 5ta, §. 5.

‡ Prolegom. ad Biblia Polyglotta cap. 12. Sect. 15.

¶ Catalogus Librorum Manuscriptorum Angliæ et Hybernæ Tom. 1. Part 3. p. 174. Num. 2484.

|| Zetus, Gedalias, David Ganz, Abraham Levita, alique. § It is generally said of Hillel by the Jewish writers, that he entered on his Presidency of the Great Sanhedrim about an hundred years before the destruction of Jerusalem.



there is either something internal in the matter related, or else external to it from other evidences, that convict them of the falsity; but where there is nothing of this, the testimony of the historian is to stand good in that, which he relates of the affairs of his own country or people. And therefore there being nothing concerning those two Targums, which can be alleged either from what is contained in them, or from any external evidence to contradict what the Jewish historians tell us of their antiquity, I reckon their testimony is to stand good concerning this matter. And this testimony is strongly corroborated by the style, in which they are penned. For it being the purest, and the best of all, that is written in the Jerusalem dialect, and without the mixture of those many exotic words, which the Jews of Jerusalem and Judæa afterwards took into it from the Greek, Latin, and other languages, this proves them to have been written before those Jews had that common converse with those nations, from whom these words were borrowed, and especially before Jerusalem and Judæa were made a province of the Roman empire. For altho' the Jews of the dispersions had long before conversed with those nations, and learned their languages, yet this did not affect the Jews of Jerusalem and Judæa, but they still retained their vulgar tongue in the same dialect, in which it had been formed after their return from Babylon, till Pompey had subjected them to the Roman yoke; but after that Greeks, Romans, and Italians, and other subjects of the Roman empire, either as soldiers or civil officers, or on other occasions coming into that country, and there mixing themselves among them, from that time they first began to borrow from them those words, which corrupted their language. And therefore since these Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan are the clearest of this corruption of all that we have in the Jerusalem dialect, this may assuredly convince us, that they were written before this corruption had obtained any prevalency among that people. And for this reason I reckon them both to have been composed before our Saviour's time, and the Targums of Onkelos to be the ancients of the two, because it is the purer, though the other comes very little behind it herein, which evidently shews it to have been written very soon after it. The Jews speak very magnificent things of Jonathan, but say little of Onkelos, though they manifestly prefer the Targum of Onkelos before that of the other, as indeed it deserves they should, it being by much the more exact of the two; the reason of this is, they all hold Jonathan to have been a natural Jew; but the general vogue among them being, that Onkelos was a proselyte, and sister's son to Titus, who destroyed Jerusalem, for both these reasons, though both are gross mistakes, they have lesser regard to his memory than to that of the other, tho' they have the greater for his work.

The only thing that can be alledged against the antiquity of these two Targums, is, that neither Origen, nor Epiphanius, nor Jerom, nor



any of the ancient fathers of the Christian church make any mention of them. These three which I have named, were well skill'd in the Jewish learning, and therefore it is thought, they could not have avoided taking some notice of them, had they been extant in their time, especially not Jerom, who lived in Judæa a great part of his life, and there conversed with the learnedest rabbies of that sect; and was very inquisitive after all that was to be learned from them for his better understanding of the Hebrew Scriptures, and yet in all his writings we find no mention of any Targum or Chaldee paraphrase, nor doth he make use of any such in any of his commentaries, in which they would have been very useful unto him; and therefore from hence they conclude, that certainly they were not in being in his time. But this being a negative argument it proves nothing. For there might be many reasons, which might hinder Jerom from knowing any thing of them, though in common use among the Jews of his time. For first, though Jerom understood Hebrew well, it was late e'er he studied the Chaldee, and therefore it was with difficulty that he attained to any knowledge in it,\* of which he himself complains; and therefore might not be sufficiently skill'd to read those Targums, had he known any thing of them. But 2dly, it is most probable, that he knew nothing of them. For the Jews were in those times very backward in communicating any of their books or their knowledge to the Christians; and therefore tho' Jerom † got some of their rabbies to help him in his studies about the Hebrew scriptures, yet he could not have them for this purpose without bribing them to it with great sums. And what assistance they gave him herein was contrary to the established rules and orders then made and received among that people, and therefore when these Rabbi's came to Jerom to give him that assistance in his Hebrew studies, which he hired them for, they did it by stealth,‡ coming to him only by night, as Nicodemus did unto Christ, for fear of offending the rest of their brethren. And this being at that time the humour of those people, we may hence conclude, that those rabbi's served Jerom very poorly in the matter he hired them for, and communicated nothing further to him, than they saw needs they must to earn his money. And 3dly, as to the other fathers, none of them understood the Chaldee tongue; and besides, there was in their time such an aversion and bitter enmity between the Christians and the Jews, as hindered all manner of converse between them, so that neither would willingly communicate any thing to each other; and no wonder then that in those days these Targums were concealed from all Christians, as being doubly locked up from them,

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\* In præfatione ad Danielelem.  
 † Hieronymus in Epistola ad Pammachium 65. In præfatione in Librum Paralipomenon, & in præfatione ad librum Job.

† Hieronymus in Epistola ad Pammachium 65.

that is not only by the language in which they were written, but also by the malice and perverseness of the Jews, who had the keeping of them. But 4thly, besides their malice and perverseness, they had also some very good reasons to be cautious as to this matter. For there being many prophecies of the old Testament concerning the Messiah explained in these Targums in the same manner as we Christians do, it behoved those of that sect not to communicate them to any Christians, lest thereby they should give them an advantage for the turning of their own artillery against them, and the cutting of the very throat of their cause with their own weapons. And for this reason it happened, that it was much above a thousand years after Christ, e'er Christians knew any thing of those Targums, and scarce three centuries have passed since they have become common among us; and therefore it is not to be wondered at, that the ancientest fathers of the Christian church knew nothing of them. And all this put together I think may be sufficient to convince any one, that these Targums may be as ancient as is said, though neither Jerom nor any of the ancient fathers of the Christian church say any thing of them, and that their silence herein can be no argument to the contrary.

As to all the other Targums besides these two Onkelos on the law and Jonathan on the prophets, they are all most certainly of a much later date. This is above shewn of some of them from the matters therein contained, but the style in which they are written proves it of all of them. For it being in every one of them more barbarous and impure, and much more corrupted with exotic words and grammatical irregularities, than that of the Jerusalem Talmud, this shews them to have been written after the composure of that Talmud, that is after the beginning of the fourth century after Christ. It is also to be observed of these later Targums, that they abound much with Talmudic fables; if these were taken out of the Babylonish Talmud, this will bring down their date much lower, and prove them to have been written after that Talmud also, as well as after the other, that is after the beginning of the sixth century after Christ. This hath been already proved of the Targum on the Megilloth, which is one of them that I now treat of in this paragraph, and possibly it may be true of some of the rest also. By reason of the barbarity of the style in which these later Targums are written, and the great mixture of exotic words, with which they abound, they are badly understood among the Jews even by the most learned of their Rabbies and therefore are not much regarded by them. But of late Cohen De Lara a Jew of Hamburgh, and the most learned of that sect, which the last century hath produced, hath published a Lexicon for their help, in which he expounds all the Chaldee, Syriac, Arabic, Persian, Turkish, Greek, Latin, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, Gallic, German, Saxon, Dutch, and English words, which any where occur in their Talmudic and Rabbinical writings. This book was a work of 40 years'

labour and study, and first published at Hamburgh Anno Dom. 1668, where the author some years after died.

The Targum of Onkelos and Jonathan are in so great esteem among the Jews, that they hold them to be of the same authority with the original sacred text; and for the support of this opinion they feign them to have come from mount Sinai in the same manner, as they say their oral law did, and tell us the same story of their original, that is, that God did there deliver them to Moses, and that they from him were delivered down in a like chain of traditional descent from one generation to another through the hands of the prophets, and other holy men, till at length they were this way received \* by Onkelos and Jonathan, and that all that they did was only to put them into writing. This shews the high opinion and esteem which they have of them; but the true reason of it, and of their equalling them with the text, was that they were every Sabbathday read in their synagogues in the same manner as the original sacred word it self, of which they were versions. It hath been above already shewn, that after the Chaldee became the vulgar tongue of the Jews, the weekly lessons out of the law and the prophets in their synagogues having been first read in Hebrew were by an interpreter standing by the reader rendered into Chaldee. This continued for some time; but afterwards when Targums were made, the interpretation was read out of them without any more employing interpreters for this purpose; that is, the readers did first read a verse out of the sacred Hebrew text, and then the same again out of the Chaldee Targum, and so went on from verse to verse till they had read out the whole lesson; and the Targums of Onkelos on the law, and Jonathan on the prophets, having obtained an approbation beyond all the other Targums on these scriptures, they at length were alone used in this service. And this use of them was retained in their synagogues even down to late times, and in places where the Chaldee was among the people as much an unknown language as the Hebrew. For Elias Levita, who lived about two hundred years since † tells us, that they were thus used in his time in Germany, and elsewhere; that is that they were read in their synagogues after the Hebrew text in the same manner as I have described; and agreeable to this purpose, though only for private use, they had some of their Bibles written out in Hebrew and Chaldee together, that is each verse first in Hebrew, and then the same verse next in Chaldee, and thus from verse to verse in the same manner through the whole volume. In these Bibles the Targum of Onkelos was the Chaldee version for the law, and that of Jonathan for the prophets, and for the Hagiographa the other Targums, that were written on them. One of these Bibles thus written ‡ Buxtorf

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\* Talmud in Tractatu Megilla, cap. I, Zacutus in Juchasin.

† In præfatione ad Methurgeiman.

‡ In Epistola ad Hottingerum.



tells us he had seen at Strasburg, and ¶ Walton acquaints us, that he had the perusal of two others of the same sort, one in the publick library of the church of Westminster, and the other in the private study of Mr Thomas Gataker.

Whether the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan were received for this use so early, as in our Saviour's time, I cannot say; but this seems certain, if not these particular Targums, yet some others then were in hands for the instruction of the people, and were read among them in private as well as in public for this purpose; and that they had such not only on the law and the prophets, but also on all the other Hebrew scriptures. For as I have said before it was never a usage among the Jews to lock up the holy scriptures, or any part of them, from the people in a language unknown to them. For when dispersed among the Greeks they had them in Greek, and where the Chaldee was the vulgar language, they had them in Chaldee. And when || Christ was called out to read the second lesson in the synagogue of Nazareth, of which he was a member, he seems to have read it out of a Targum. For the words then read by him out of Isaiah lxi, 1, as recited by St Luke iv, 18, do not exactly agree either with the Hebrew original, or with the Septuagint version in that place, and therefore it seems most likely, that they were read out of some Chaldee Targum, which was made use of in that Synagogue. And when he cried out upon the cross in the words of the Psalmist, Psalm xxii, 1, *Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani*, i. e. my God my God why hast thou forsaken me, Matth. xxvii, 46, he quoted them not out of the Hebrew text, but out of the Chaldee Paraphrase: for in the Hebrew text it is *Eli Eli lamah Azabtani*, and the word *Sabachthani* is no where to be found, but in the Chaldee tongue.

Those Targums are the ancientest Books the Jews have next the Hebrew Scriptures. This is certain of the Targums of Onkelos on the law, and of Jonathan on the Prophets; and although the others are of a later date, yet they were for the most part transcribed and composed out of other ancient Glosses and Targums, which were in use long before. Such I have shewn they had soon after the time of Ezra; but these being written in the pure Jerusalem dialect of the Chaldee language must in those times, in which the language of the Jerusalem Talmud, and of the later Targums was spoken, be as much an unknown language to the people, as formerly the Hebrew was to them on their return from the Babylonish Captivity. And therefore they seem to have been composed in this corrupted style of that dialect of purpose for their help; and from hence it is, that I take them to be no other, than

¶ In Prolegom. ad Biblia Polyglotta, cap. 12. Sect. 6.

|| Luke iv, 16, 17,



as Targums of the old Targums, that is the old Targums, which were in use before the time of Onkelos and Jonathan, translated and written over again from the purer Jerusalem dialect (which was in the time of the composure of those later Targums no longer understood by the people) into that which they then did understand, that is, that corrupt language of the Jerusalem Chaldee dialect, in which they were composed. And that therefore these old Targums with the addition of some rabbinical fables and Rabbinical fooleries, which are interspersed in them, are the whole of their contexture, and that all of them, that is all the later Targums (I mean all excepting Onkelos on the law, and Jonathan on the prophets) were composed within the compass of one and the same age. The uniformity of their style plainly proves this, and the corruptness of it proves that it was after the composure of the Jerusalem Talmud, as hath been already shewn; but in what age it was after that composure is uncertain. It seems most probable to me, that it was in that\* in which the Babylonish Talmud was compiled, and that some of them were written a little before, and some of them a little after the publication of it. For that Talmud making mention of some of them proves these to have been written before it, and some of them making mention of that Talmud prove these to have been written after it.

They are all of them of great use for the better understanding not only of the Old Testament on which they are written, but also of the New. As to the Old Testament they vindicate the genuineness of the present Hebrew text by proving it the same that was in use, when these Targums were made, contrary to the opinion of those, who think the Jews corrupted it after our Saviour's time. They help to explain many words and phrases in the Hebrew original, for the meaning whereof we should otherwise have been at a loss; and they hand down to us many of the ancient customs and usages of the Jews, which much help to the illustrating those Scriptures, on which they are written. And some of these with the phraseologies, idioms, and peculiar forms of speech, which we find in them, do in many instances help as much for the illustrating and better understanding of the New Testament as of the Old. For the Jerusalem Chaldee dialect, in which they are written, being the same, which was the vulgar language of the Jews in our Saviour's time, many of its idioms, phraseologies, and forms of speech, which from hence came into the writings of the New Testament, are found in these Targums, and from thence are best to be illustrated and explained. The Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan must certainly be allowed to be useful for this purpose, as being written just before the time of our Saviour; and although the others were much later, and written in a corrupted style much differing from that of the other, yet the same idioms,

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\* The Babylonish Talmud was composed about the beginning of the 6th Century after Christ.

phrases, and forms of speech still remaining, they serve for this use as well as the other, especially where transcribed from other ancients Targums, as I suppose they mostly were.

They also very much serve the Christian cause against the Jews, by interpreting many of the prophecies of the Messiah in the Old Testament in the same manner as the Christians do. I shall here instance in some of them. . . . .

The account which Dr Prideaux gives of these texts is of no importance to our present subject: the texts are these :

Gen. iii, 15.    Gen. xlix, 10.    Numb. xxiv, 17.    Isaiah ix, 6, 7.  
Isaiah xi.    Isaiah lii, and liii.    Micah v. 2.    Psalm ii.    Psalm xlv.  
Psalm lxxii.

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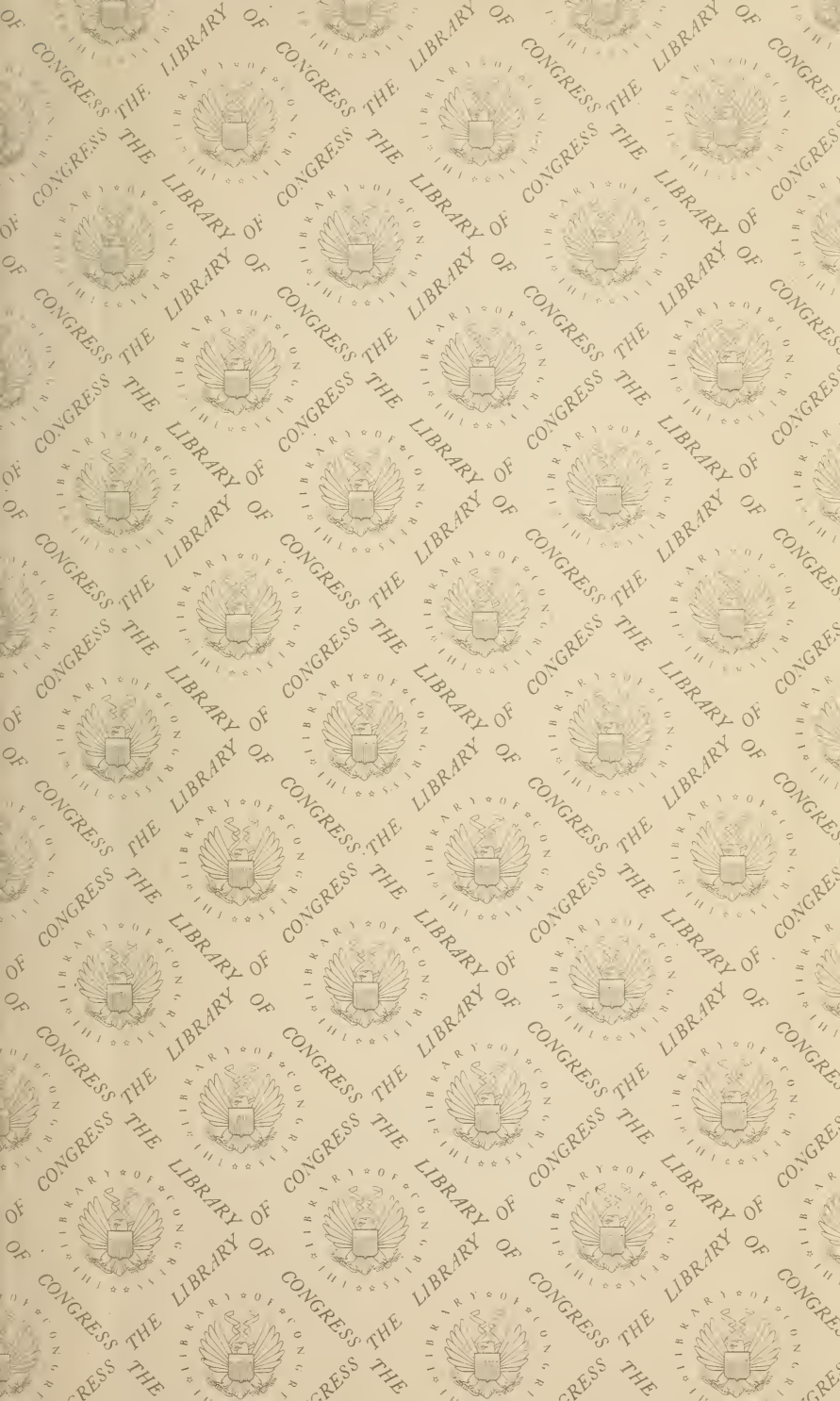




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